FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

VOLUME 34 / NUMBER 5 MAY 1983

Since 1949 the purpose of Fellowship in Prayer is to promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice, and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

WHEN Abraham Menashe speaks of his photographs "forming a prayer," we hear him expressing a feeling common among contemporary artists, namely, that their labors are basically spiritual. Artists — creatures more of feeling and intuition than of thought, and of ineluctable involvement in the world of their senses and sensibilities — are seldom those who achieve direct religious experience. They are limited as saints and mystics aren't. Nevertheless, they frequently are aware of the ability within them to reach beyond their talents into realms out of limits to most. Thus James Joyce referred to "epiphanies" in his work, and Virginia Woolf closes her novel *To the Lighthouse* with a woman painter realizing, in triumph, that she "had had her vision . . . ."

This sort of highly personal apprehension of the eternal seems to be the only sort that can be produced today that is truly art. Those who have visited the Vatican's recent exhibition of "The Papacy and Art" have seen art produced as it is produced at the highest level in a society organized around a meaning. This is not feasible in the contemporary world, where there is no meaning. As a consequence, it is hard if not impossible to turn out publicly acceptable religious art. The single painting of the century which carries a meaning clear to everyone is Picasso's *Guernica*, in which the meaning is political and pacifist. Everyone acknowledges the trashiness of what is manufactured as "religious art" — the tricky Dalis of the Crucifixion and the Last Supper — while a masterwork such as Durer's master drawing of a pair of praying hands, reproduced on stamps, on blurred postcards, and even in plastic as bookends, has been spoiled by overfamiliarity and the attachment to it of sentimental and commercial associations as thick as varnish.

Today's artists have to steer entirely clear of traditional western images. If you want to compose a religious opera, you forget about Mephistopheles, who served Gounod and Boito so well, and — like Philip Glass — turn for inspiration to the myths of India and to ancient Indian melody and rhythm as well. If you want to write a truly religious piece of literature that is also truly literature, you throw away *The Reader's Digest*, which has just "digested" the Bible, and — like Gary Snyder, Robert Lowell, or Randall Jarrell — try to make it out of the unpleasant, painful complexities of your own existence. And if you want to paint or sculpt a truly religious work, you do not attempt a pieta, a deposition, or even a pair of praying hands, but — like the late Mark Rothko — in the pictures painted for a chapel in Houston — search on the surface of your canvas for a radiance, subtler than light, which no one ever saw before.

Artists have been obliged to become private, complicated and difficult if not esoteric, eccentric, and unique. For those of us on the lookout for genuine communications from our contemporaries, nothing less is of any real interest. In the pages of this special issue, you will find insights into and appreciations of some artists who live in this century and lead spiritual lives, each one of whom, I believe, would also be willing to speak of his or her work as "forming a prayer." — PG

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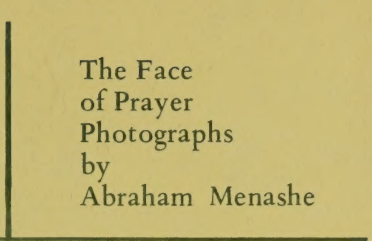

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Interview with the artist-illustrator

Frederick Franck

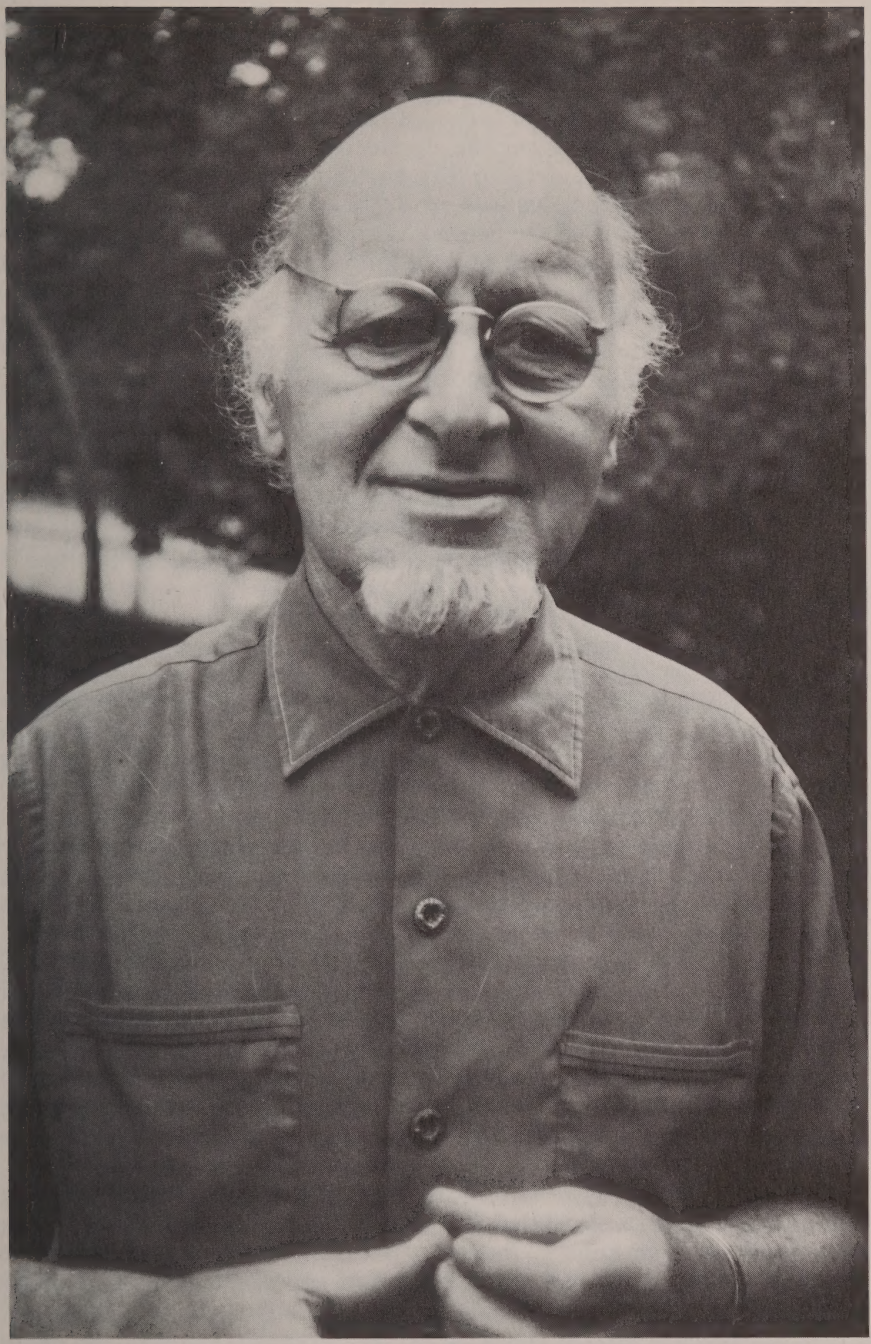
by GARNETTE ARLEDGE

BEING with Frederick Franck is like looking at Nature. You know it's all one, but there are so many places to look.

The bumblebees loving the blossoms, the rabbit hopping in ecstacy through the clover, the cracked robin egg, the delicate lacy new leaf, the sun glowing, the sound, the smell, the color, the glory of a gorgeous summer day, ripe with wisdom, fresh with clarity.

The sensory experience on meeting Frederick Franck is like that meadow: light, warmth, humor, gentleness, and the sharp clean smell of a Dutch pipe.

The meeting occurred on the terrace of the Rabbi Joseph H. Lookstein Upper School of Ramaz in Manhattan, where the Society for the Arts,



Religion and Contemporary Culture (ARC) had gathered for its quarterly meeting, "Presentation and Solitude". Dr. Franck spoke on "Art as an Act of Faith".

Dr. Franck is an artist and author of many books, including *The Zen of Seeing, Zen and Zen Classics, The Awakened Eye, The Book of Angelus Silesius, The Buddha Eye, Art As a Way,* and *Days with Albert Schweitzer.* He holds degrees in medicine, dentistry, and fine arts. He was the only artist to record all four sessions of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). In the midst of the ARC conference he gave the following interview to *Fellowship in Prayer:*

"I see the way of the artist as a kind of pilgrimage. When you go on a pilgrimage, you set out from where you happen to be and start walking toward a place of great sanctity in the hope of returning from it renewed, enriched, and sanctified.

"However far you may walk, every pilgrimage is a safari into your own dark interior, an inner journey. For pilgrimages belong to the inner world, to that realm called the 'religious'. There are, of course, innumerable pitfalls on the inner journey; a great variety of mountebanks and charlatans, from commercial gurus to bigoted fundamentalists who have their traps baited for the spiritually starved . . ."

HOWEVER, Dr. Franck's experience is that there is a new religious attitude emerging. Wherever he goes in America, Europe, or Japan, he meets these countless "natural friends" who have had to turn inward for meaning and values — friends who seem to belong to some informal, unstructured, non-organized, almost monastic "Order" that transcends all religious demarcation. The unwritten rules of this Order include a return to voluntary simplified ways of living, an assumption of full responsibility for one's own acts, as well as a sense of responsibility to one's fellow beings and to the Earth itself.

He continued, as around us on the sunny Upper East Side terrace ARC members lunched on quiche and salad, "It is not too early to see the practice of an art, once again, as one of the many ways, in the oriental sense of the word, namely, as one of those life-long disciplines, the tea ceremony for instance, or the martial arts, or calligraphy, disciplines by which one may attain one's own Truth, as in meditation and prayer . . . To be in touch with the marrow of existence is actually all Zen is about, and all that human living is about."

"Zen is in reality a matter of being in touch with the innermost working of life; it is, of course, also a Buddhist school of thought, but I am not talking about that. It is an inscape, instead of an escape, of going deeply inside yourself. In other words, it is not an intellectual approach, rather an experiential approach. It is not a religion, but that which makes religion religious.

"Ten minutes ago on this terrace," Dr. Franck continued, "a young

woman came up to me and said, 'You may not remember me, but I was in your workshop two years ago at St. Peter's and I want you to know of what tremendous value that initiation into "zen of seeing" has been to me since then . . .' Well, I remember her; you don't forget people after you have really been in touch with them!" These Seeing/Drawing workshops are for many people an eye opener, an inner eye opener. I cannot tell beforehand what a person will get out of the workshop; what happens is based on what that person brings to it . . . Whether what they are doing is labelled art or not is not the point. These are workshops in total non-phoniness."

The Zen of Seeing: Seeing/Drawing as a Meditation, a best seller, was drawn and handwritten by Frederick Franck and published by Vantage Books in 1973. Since that time he has given over 100 workshops in Europe and all over the United States. Invitations to give them came spontaneously, not through an agency; workshops were requested by the readers of Franck's books from Corpus Christi to Seattle and Nova Scotia as well as in Germany, Holland, and England.

"The workshops deal not with an external activity but how to get in touch with the inner self, through drawing the simple things of nature. I also give a limited number of workshops on drawing the human figure, which I call 'Confrontation with the Human.' I limit them to 20 people and both workshops are described in my book *The Awakened Eye*. Seeing/drawing is a discipline, it is not learning to produce art objects for exhibitions, for consumption. It is not part of the art game, not of the religious game. It is not art as ego trip, as self-aggrandisement. Seeing/drawing is a getting in touch with the inner workings of life, a way of becoming fully alive, fully aware", he said, with a joyous twinkle in his eyes. Interviewing Dr. Franck, so fully sympathetic and alive, became an experience in seeing/drawing itself.

SEEING/drawing is done with the entire body and mind as a unit. There are many other ways for other temperaments, say dance, not dance for an ulterior motive of fame or money or exercise, but as an expression of one's humanness, in which the activity becomes an equivalent of prayer and meditation.

"A healing?", and here he pauses piercingly assessing the question, "yes, a healing if you mean becoming whole. Seeing/drawing is not conceptual. If I sketch a face, I conceptualize it, it becomes an oval with some scribbles for the hair. If I *draw* that face I am confronted with a total mystery, for drawing is an act of reverence and respect for that human face. A cow just looks, but a human being has the capacity to *see*, is not just an onlooker; he has the capacity to identify with what confronts him. Modern man is bombarded so constantly with images, that he has lost the art of seeing. We eat celery, lettuce, all our lives, we can recognize and label things but we never *see* our celery stalk until we draw it. Then we can begin to use the eye/heart/hand reflex and life opens up.

"Art is that which, despite all, gives hope. I have few 'beliefs' and I am open to changing them at the drop of a hat. But I am not without faith, that is, trust. Trust in the Buddha nature, that Christ spirit that I see as the core of every human being. Here I find the totally valid image of what being human is

all about, to be the human core. One may say that this deepest human reality is unattainable for us ordinary human beings. Still, unless we glimpse it, I feel that we have missed the point of having lived the human life. This is the fundamental paradox.

"What it amounts to is being in touch, beyond ego, with that which we really are — with the True Self, the 'True Man without a Label', which the 9th-century Zen monk, Rinzai, spoke of."

On Dr. Franck's quest for his own 'True Man without a Label' as recorded in his book, *Pilgrimage of Now/Here*, or as he said on that Manhattan terrace, to "no/where", he interviewed His Holiness, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, Sakya Gejong Tenzin Gyatsho. In that conversation the Dalai Lama wanted to hear all about Dr. Franck's trans-religious "oasis of inwardness", Pacem in Terris, and discussed with him the spirituality of the young. The Dalai Lama said:

"I, too, have met very many young people in these years of exile from Tibet. I have come to see that cultural and age gaps are almost always spiritual gaps. The young? The hippies? They come in dozens to Dharamsala. What does it matter that they look dirty? They express the hopelessness of people when their traditional cultural ideals reveal themselves as being empty of meaning. Long hair does not stand in the way of the search for ultimate meaning, neither does a shaven head help it," His Holiness smiled, rubbing his own.

"Of course, Buddhism must have an enormous attraction for people, when the sponginess, the hollowness of power, the unreliability of money, of status, the doubtful benefits of 'progress' dawn upon them. It must be a revelation then to find a religion which sees the 'Jewel in the Lotus', the Buddha nature, not only in every human being, but even in every sentient being, a religion that gives supreme meaning and vocation, an infinite dignity to every human life, and which puts the responsibility for attaining the supreme insight squarely on a man's own shoulders and stimulates him to reach it by his own efforts. The good qualities in man are our only hope. This doesn't mean at all that the bad ones are overlooked, but that the basic quality that tends to be good and noble must be recognized, emphasized, cultivated, encouraged. Where else lies hope?"

The Dalai Lama asked Dr. Franck about Albert Schweitzer, knowing he had served on the staff at the Lambarene hospital.

"For an hour or so I reminisced about my experiences in Africa. The Dalai Lama kept asking questions and wanted to know my final evaluation of Albert Schweitzer.

Dr. Franck replies in *Pilgrimage to Now/Here* that:

"He was one of the three men in my life who have given me most. Schweitzer was a very great human being, almost over-lifesized and a pioneer: as a doctor early in 1913, he was a pioneer in true foreign aid to the needy, without any political or religious strings attached. As a theologian, he was a pioneer in a new approach to biblical research. As a musician, he was responsible for one of the few things that do honor to our times; the re-discovery of Johann Sebastian Bach. At age 86, he was still a pioneer, this time in his pro-

test against atom-bomb testing. He was also a pioneer in missionary work, placing service above obsession with nominal conversion. He was a pioneer in practical ecumenism. As a doctor, musician, philosopher, he pushed every one of his potentialities to its furthest limits. What more can one expect from a man?"

"How about his 'reverence for life'?", queried the Dalai Lama.

"It was a noble inspiration. He gave me a photograph of the spot on the Ogowe River where it came to him as a transcendental experience, an illumination. Still, to me, 'I have reverence for life' is an amazing statement. What is the 'I' that has reverence for life? As if there were anything but life? As if there were a dichotomy between 'I' and 'life'. As if 'I' were anything but 'life'. Had he gone one step further, he would have broken through the barrier of ego and he would be my third Bodhisattva.

"Now I honor his memory as that of a great man, a great personality with whom I was privileged to work."

The Dalai Lama responded, "You have just touched on something very crucial, namely on the split between 'I' and 'the other', between 'I' and 'life itself'. In this all schools of Buddhism (as it is called in the West; we prefer the traditional term, *Dharma*) agree. The quintessence of *Dharma* is that one understands the causes in oneself of one's own *dukkha*, or pain, thereby becoming able to tell others of these causes. Precisely your questions, 'Who is this "I" who has reverence?' is indeed solved in Buddhist thought, which says: 'To suppose that things and beings exist independently, have an ego-nature, is the atman-view and this is ignorance. For one who is freed, this ego-view is destroyed. It is the highest aspect of insight. This does not mean that the sense objects perceived by the six senses are negated, but that our conventional, relativistic view of them is seen as being incomplete. The living person who goes on from day to day is real enough, but the innate I-feeling of all beings has only a relative reality. One of the virtues of a Buddha is: He lets the rain of his friendliness and compassion fall steadily and continuously upon all suffering beings."

"I believe, Your Holiness, that what you have just expressed is the neglected essence of Christianity as well as Buddhism. A Christian mystic, Tauler, has said: 'Nothing burns in hell but the ego.' One could paraphrase this: 'Nothing is crucified but ego, nothing is resurrected but Christ.'"

As their conversation continued, Dr. Franck talked about the other two men who have meant so much to him.

"The others are Pope John XIII and Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki. All three were over eighty when I met them, all three had a spirit that was eternally young. Pope John is the one I love most, for he was all warmth and humanness. I see him as a genius of the heart, as a Bodhisattva, who far transcended being a pope. In his last years, I believe, he was truly enlightened, his ego had dissolved. Not a trace of narcissism was left. Whatever he did came from the Self. 'I am only the pope', he would say. He had overcome all prejudices. He had overcome the theology of the scribes, which has estranged men from 'the Light that enlighteneth every man who come into the world'. Having over-

come his ego, the Church as collective ego did not worry him very much. Speaking of his own impending death, he said: 'My bags are packed.' His humor, his tolerance, freedom, compassion, his wisdom, his intrepidity, all were integrated. To me he was proof that enlightenment can be reached through any spiritual discipline, in his case a very conventional Catholic one. In Christian terms, I see him as a manifestation of the Holy Spirit."

"And Suzuki? I came upon the writings of this prophet of Zen to the West about thirty years ago as upon a revelation, and he has remained my almost daily companion. He is one of those rare human beings who are able to express the inexpressible and transmit the intransmissible from many different angles, so that it may penetrate on many levels of the reader's own insights. He never leads one astray into bogus mysticism or esoteric symbolism; on the contrary, he cuts off all evasions, self-indulgence, rationalizations, and conceptualizations, in order to point directly at the Self-nature in a man as something that he does not 'have', but that in fact he 'is', beyond the empirical ego. Suzuki attempts to lead his reader to the Great Wisdom-Compassion, to a 'realization which is not self-realization, but realization pure and simple, beyond subject and object', as Thomas Merton expressed it.

"To my mind Suzuki, too, was a Bodhisattva, one who attained full enlightenment, then dwelt among those who search and suffer in order to offer them a glimpse of reality, of enlightenment. Neither he nor Pope John had a doctrine to teach, these men were the very doctrine they taught."

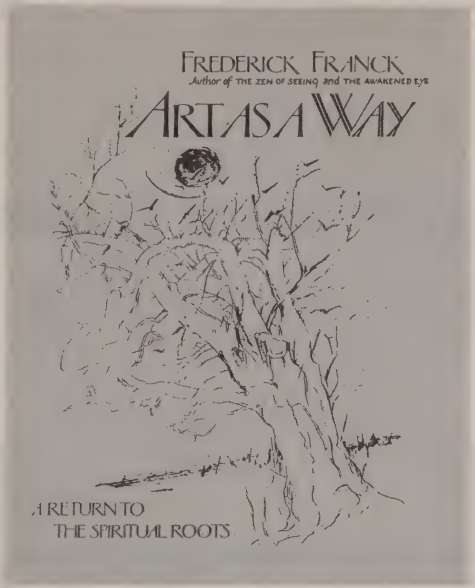
And it is in the spirit of the three highly respected men that Dr. Franck, with the help of one true carpenter and craftsman, and his wife, Claske, unearthed and restored an 18th-century watermill across the roaring Wayananda River from his home in Warwick, New York. He had gazed at the poison-ivy covered stone building, serving as a neglected dump, while he restored his own home from the former 19th-century McCann's Saloon.

After returning from Rome, where he drew/saw his beloved Pope John's funeral proceedings, Dr. Franck created *Pacem in Terris* — his meditation center where he holds concerts and workshops — from 1200 wheelbarrows full of debris.

Now, in the tenth concert season, *Pacem in Terris*, once a symbol of man's disregard for his environment is a monument to one man who cared for man from another who does. The dedication reads:

"I built Pacem in Terris, an oasis of inwardness, in honor of Angelo Roncalli, John XXIII, Prophet of Human Solidarity. Following him, I built on ancient foundations, anchored in rock, vivified by living water. May the Spirit soar and make us creatures see our unity."

At a recent concert, Dr. Franck welcomed the overflow audience to the performance of the carefully selected Mozart and Schubert, selected for the artistic-spiritual quality as a kind of non-doctrinal ministry. And while the Cremona Quartet played the music beautifully, the listeners surrounded by the peace of the restored stone building, gazed at the many symbols of the True Self formed by Dr. Franck and nature, watched the Japanese goldfish floating in the pond, listened to the glorious Mozart, and rejoiced in the experience.



A Book by Franck

'ART AS A WAY' is full of love in the profound and simple line-drawings, in the handlettered text, in the spirit of the author It's a quiet celebration of the divine, the Christ within the simple, the plain, the old, the wrinkled, the spirit, and therefore the beautiful. The author writes, "We are at the end of a period of affluence and waste and hence of art as a status symbol investment, luxury item." He says "it is not too early to see the practice of an art, once again, as one of the 'ways,' in the oriental sense of the word, namely as one of those disciplines, like the tea ceremony, the martial arts, or calligraphy, by which one may attain one's own Truth, as by meditation and prayer. To be in touch with the marrow of existence is actually all Zen is about, and all that human living is about."

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Making violins and harmony

Constance Ramsey

by ELIZABETH SOCOLOW

THE ROOM of the artist is warm brown, many eyes softly watching from the knotty pine paneling that lines the four walls. There is a double bed and a handmade workbench — an oak top resting on hand-planed four by fours, rescued from some demolition if the antique look of the wood is to be believed. Under double windows overlooking a green yard, the carpenter's bench with its vise, lamp, peanut-butter jar of tools, and plastic Mickey Mouse riding a tricycle claims center stage. The carpenter is a violin-maker living by chance in a wood-lined room. She has made the workbench herself, did find the four-by-fours at a demolition site, and has designed the table to come apart easily. She is used to removing wooden pieces from other wooden pieces, because much of the arduous crafting of stringed instruments involves shaping and bending wood around wooden patterns and then separating the bent and shaped wood from the template. The bench is also designed to disassemble easily because its maker is used to moving. Her name belies her changeability, mobility, and artistic growth. Constance is her name.

An illuminated diploma on her wall, elegantly hand-embossed in gold and beige and green, reads:

> *CONSTANCE B. RAMSEY For having served a two and a half year apprenticeship in the Musical Instrument Maker's Shop in Williamsburg, Virginia, and having exhibited outstanding talent in violin-making and museum interpretation, we present this expression of our gratitude.*

The diploma is dated September 17th, 1981, and is signed by three master craftsmen who instructed her: Marcus Hansen, Gerald Kowalski, George D.

Wilson. I ask her what the "B." stands for, and she tells me: "Browning. My mother's middle name. My grandmother named her for Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who was popular then and who *did* something."

The workbench at the center of the room is half the length and twice the height of the bed. The two rectangles stand like sculptured harmony enjoyed by a woman who smiles in their direction from one corner of the room. This is a model of the grandmother who admired Mrs. Browning. Sculpted in golden wax, waiting to be cast in bronze, the eyes, though blank, are beneficent, the cheekbones forceful, the carriage of the head on the neck serene. The smile is extraordinarily contemporary and timeless as that other rare and famous carving of a smiling woman: the twelfth-century laughing angel who stands in the entryway of the Rheims cathedral. This twentieth-century woman's cheek is brushed by a white curtain billowing in the summer breeze. The sculptor has drawn the white curtains up over the curtain rods of the windows so that they take on the shape of angels' wings.

The carved head also looks toward a standing statue of a girl contemplating her leg in motion. The standing piece asserts the lines of carving in a declarative and open way, not smoothed to high polish, all signs of labor gone. The moving child rests on the floor opposite a row of chisels, gouges, jeweler's saw, calipers, files, and other tools suspended like kitchen knives from a wooden bar attached to the wall. These are the instruments of the violin-maker, not the sculptor. Most of them date to the nineteenth century.

Their current owner is twenty-eight years old. She has completed five violins, of which the Foundation of Colonial Williamsburg has purchased two. Having spent three years in Williamsburg, which was created and funded by the Rockefeller family, Constance moved to Princeton, which bears

Carnegie's stamp. In Virginia, she learned to make violins. She has come to Princeton to learn the techniques involved in bronze casting. In addition to the standing sculpture of the girl, there are several smaller nudes, one reclining in a hammock, and a large commissioned work of two harmonious circles bound together with Chinese characters.

Miss Ramsey is doing her casting at the Johnson Atelier, which produces the life-models seen so frequently in Princeton and environs. Although Constance's own style is remarkably different from those life-models with their name-brand clothes, the Johnson studio is allowing her to learn the craft and skills needed to accomplish her vision in bronze. She expects she will move on when the Foundry has taught her what it can. She would like to live in many different places before settling down. She has promised her mother a bronze casting of her grandmother's wax portrait.

In her life, Constance has had to listen to the creative sources in herself and to move as they have guided her. She enjoys speaking of her creative power in this way and, while acknowledging its felt presence, also knows she needs the order and discipline that the craft of violin-making imposes on the wild sense of beauty and energy that defines her own spirit's motions. Order and creativity dance harmoniously struggling in this space, as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries also exchange elements. There is humor in the mixture and a wry mix-up: Constance's mother looks hopefully on this room from an old daguerreotype; a young girl in a white dress with a big white bow in her bobbed hair surely represents a grandmother's Victorian girlhood. The grandmother in the sculpture looks contemporary. Moreover, the use of tools reflects the easy eclectic choice of appropriateness and grace over absolute authenticity. On the shelves there is an electric drill, an acetylene torch, and a scroll for a violin clearly cut by a buzz saw. On the shelves, too, is a nineteenth-century wooden plane that looks large enough to have been used as a shoemaker's last, beautifully finished.

CONSTANCE uses the electric drill to make the holes in the violin scrolls for the pegs that tune and hold the strings. She uses the torch to heat the plumber's copper pipes along which the thin strips of maple for the sides of the violin and the inside curved liners are bent. In Williamsburg, the instrument makers heated the pipes over an alcohol-burning lamp, a hazard. Maple cannot be shaped over cold pipes.

Violins are made of maple, the lightest-weight hard wood, and of spruce, the lightest-weight carvable soft wood. Six strips of thin maple board are bent to form the sides of the instrument, glued at the seams to square blocks of spruce lightly glued into the gaps in the pine template of the instrument. Thick pieces of spruce that will be arched and hollowed are used for the top and bottom of the instrument. These top and bottom pieces are cut into the characteristic figure-eight violin shape and then the inch and a half of thickness is molded with chisels and shaped with gouges and scrapers and measured with calipers so that an even thickness an eighth of an inch is achieved. The violin-maker knows the top and bottom pieces are finished, not only

when the calipers declare an even thickness, and the eye and fingers a smooth surface, but when the wood sounds a certain note if knocked sharply with the knuckles. The two pieces, top and bottom, do not sound the same note, and it is up to the individual to choose which notes she wants to accomplish. The f-holes are then cut in the top of the violin. When the violin is glued together into its familiar closed curved space, the soundpost is set in place and manipulated through the f-holes by a sound post setter, a brass tool akin to a letter opener. The scroll that holds the pegs is a separate piece of carved spruce, and the neck that joins the scroll to the body of the instruments and carries the strings and the fingerboard likewise receives separate fashioning.

The accessories of the violin will be replaced fairly often in the lifetime of the instrument. As opposed to the wood used for the body, all spruce and maple, the wood of the accessories is various in grain and color: boxwood, ebony, redwood, chosen to match and complement the body, much as a purse and shoes highlight a suit. The accessories include the chinrest, pegs, fingerboard, saddle nut, bridge, tailpiece, and, inside the violin, the soundpost. The strings are the only part of the instrument not constructed of wood and their oddness gives the instrument its generic name: stringed instrument. They and the other accessories are purchased ready-made. The wooden accessories are then shaped to fit the particular instrument being worked on.

The old sonneteers, when celebrating their beloveds, were in the habit of channeling their overwhelming feelings by slowly cataloguing the singular features of the adored object. All craft involves a similar slowing down of passion in the service of care, and a naming and learning of the separate parts. So often, amusement and surprise are involved in the first discovery of how a beloved shape is made. Sears glue connects the parts of the violin. Its startling property is that, rather than being gummy and stronger in adhesion than the wood itself, it is compounded to be brittle. This way, if an instrument is dropped, the hand-worked wooden pieces will fly apart and have a better chance of staying intact themselves, dividing nicely along seams rather than jaggedly because the glue has overbound them.

Purfling is the name of the strip of layered maple, three paper-thin pieces pressed into one, inserted into the curved seams on top and bottom of the violin. Two small black lines which look as if they have been decoratively inked onto the wood are in fact purfling, or wooden seam reinforcement protecting against lateral cracking and breakage. Likewise the overhang of top and bottom over the sides is both utilitarian and decorative, a roof which can be safely struck or even nicked should the violin be dropped.

Constance has designed her own template pattern of pine rather than using one derived from a master instrument-maker. Her template, and, thus her instruments, state balance, describing more of a figure-eight and less of a pear-shape than is currently standard. She is keenly aware of time and the life-cycle of the instrument. If the craft disciplines, the knowledge of its slow development humbles its maker. Violins do not reach maturity until 75 to 100 years after their playing-life has begun. Instrument-makers never hear their creations performing at peak. And unless they are played daily and well, the

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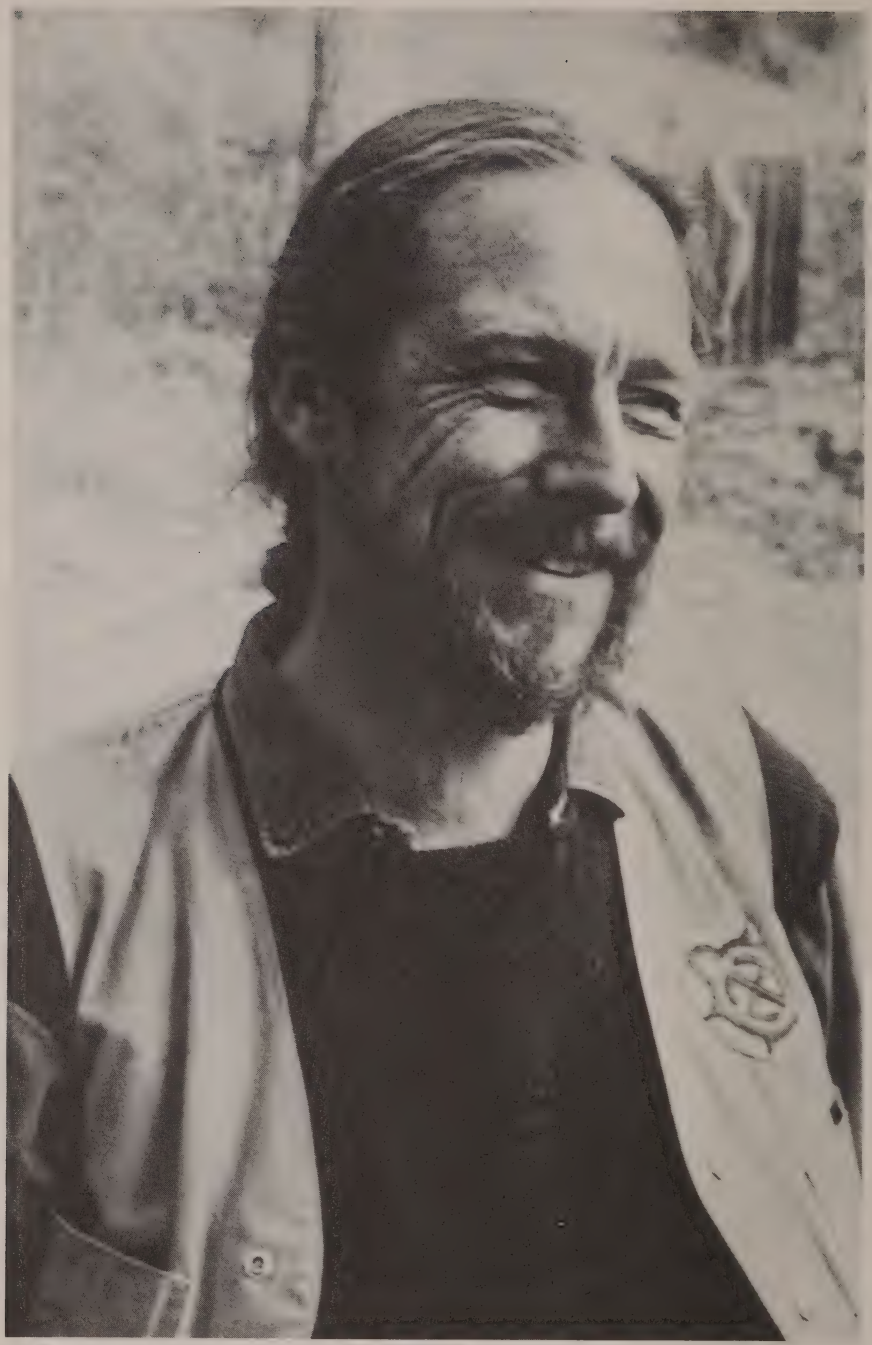

The Beat poet

Gary Snyder

by BRUCE NIXON

GARY SNYDER'S last book of poetry was published in 1974. His six collections — the first of which, *Riprap & Cold Mountain Poems,* was published in San Francisco in 1959 — all remain in print. His most recent book, *The Real Work: Interviews & Talks*, appeared in 1980. It is a gathering of conversational essays, lectures, and interviews from small literary and issue-oriented journals,

put together by an editor at New Directions. It is a modest book that focuses on Snyder's various interests — folklore and mythology, oriental philosophies and spiritual attitudes, ecology, poetry. Why should a poet of great craftsmanship, thoroughly identified with the West Coast literary scene for the past two and a half decades, label so transitory and inexact a form as the interview as his "real" work?

In the course of Gary Snyder's life and work, what has gradually become apparent is that the message is the "real" work. This intent is almost always present in the poetry, in his writings about Zen and Hinduism and northern Indian mythology, and in the various musings, manifestoes, and broadsides which concern themselves with ecological issues — all these things serving equally in revealing the unity between spirit, perception, and poetry, the sanctity of the world around us, and the attitude of humility and sense of mystery with which we need to approach the world. In a way, Snyder has been leading us to this from the very start. His first collection contains two dozen short poems by the 7th century Zen monk Han-Shan, translated according to Snyder's own unadorned sense of line and language. "Riprap," from which that first book takes its title, refers to a sort of cobblestone laid on steep, slick rock to make a trail for horses in the mountains. From the title poem:

Lay down these words
Before your mind like rocks,
placed solid, by hands
In choice of place.

From the start, Snyder's real subject has been what exists beyond words. These early poems, by prevalent literary conventions, are almost anti-poetic in their choice of subject matter, telling of mountain trails and campfires, logging, working, working men, the sounds of bulldozers in the woods, a tanker in mid ocean, snatches of perception and bits of sight and sound and insight that are direct and honest enough to illuminate something bigger.

From "T-2 Tanker Blues":

Damn me not I make a better fool. And there is nothing vaster more beautiful, remote, unthinking (eternal rose-red sunrise on the surf — great rectitude of rocks) than man, inhuman man,

At whom I look for a thousand light years from a seat near Scorpius, amazed and touched by his concern and pity for my plight, a simple star,

Then trading shapes again. My wife is gone, my girl is gone, my books are loaned, my clothes are worn, I gave away a car, and all that happened years ago. Mind and matter, love & space are frail as foam on beer. Wallowing on and on . . .

The entire "Mid August at Sourdough Mountain Lookout" is like haiku in its direct simplicity:

Down valley a smoke haze
Three days heat, after five days rain
Pitch glows on the fir-cones

Across rocks and meadows
Swarm of new flies.
I cannot remember things I once read
A few friends, but they are in cities.
Drinking cold snow-water from a tin cup
Looking down for miles
Through high still air.

Also "Milton by Firelight":

What use, Milton, a silly story
Of our lost general parents,
eaters of fruit?
The Indian, the chainsaw boy,
And a string of six mules
Came riding down to camp
Hungry for tomatoes and green apples.
Sleeping in saddle-blankets
Under a bright night-sky
Han River slantwise by morning,
Jays squall
Coffee boils

In the mid '60's, Jack Kerouac, still regarded as a sort of literary godfather to the Beat movement, was not in the state of disfavor that he is today. More of Kerouac's books are in print these days, but he seemed to enjoy a wider currency then; in his life and work, he traveled, rather unsteadily, a line between genuine spontaneity and undiscipline, truth and irresponsibility, and this was probably even more attractive to the readers in the '60's than it had been when *On The Road* was published in 1957. (This was 1968, and I was in my third year in a small private high school: I had been very carefully brought up on 19th and early 20th century English novelists, Hardy and Dickens primarily, and Americans like Melville, James, Hawthorne, and a few short stories from Hemingway and Steinbeck; *On The Road* appeared in the midst of this as a flash of light, a revelation, exotic, accessible, thrilling.) Didn't Kerouac, in his time, affect a lot of people like that? Today, he seems self conscious, undisciplined, rambling, full of self-pity; this is sad — and yet, the one book of Kerouac's which endures and continues to sparkle with life is *The Dharma Bums*, largely because the character at the heart of it unquestionably deserves the author's enchanted attention and ours.

It is a West Coast book, well-organized, happy, with a sense of purpose. Kerouac met Gary Snyder in 1955, when Snyder was a student of Oriental language and culture at the University of California, living in a tidy little zen hut in the hills above Berkeley, writing some of his poems which later appeared in *Riprap*, preparing for his first trip to Japan. So, as Kerouac described this trip to California and the amazing character he met there, it was Snyder who became Japhy Ryder of *The Dharma Bums.* Kerouac himself seemed tame by comparison; already Snyder was thoroughly ensconced in the San Francisco

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Speculating about the writer's illness

Virginia Woolf

by GARNETTE ARLEDGE

What is projected out, and seems to be external to the mind, is not outside at all, but an effect of what is in, and has not left its source.

— A Course in Miracles

THE South Downs in Sussex, England, laze in green-gold curves like a nursing mother. These nurturing hills, alive with hay wagons, solitary farmers, and wildly blackberrying bushes, signal fully: here is Mother Earth. Spending a sunny July in the Downs at a medieval dairy farm near Lewes in Rodmell, wandering along the footpaths and lanes which Virginia Woolf walked, I thought about that strange, tormented soul. After fine, warm days with soft pink sunsets, a bleak and dreary rain changed the soft old mounds of the Downs into the lonely, alien place which to Virginia was fearful:

"And I meant to record for psychological purposes that strange night when I went to meet Leonard and did not meet him. What an intensity of feeling was pressed into those hours! It was a wet windy night; and as I walked back across the field I said Now I am meeting it; now that old devil has once more got his spine through the waves. (But I cannot recapture really.) And such was the strength of my feeling that I became physically rigid. Reality, so I thought, was unveiled. And there was something noble in feeling like this; tragic, not at all petty. Then cold white lights went over the fields; and went out; and I stood under the great trees at Iford waiting for the lights of the bus. And that went by; and I felt lonelier. There was a man with a barrow walking into Lewes, who looked at me. But I could only toy with, at least control, all this until suddenly, after the last likely train had come in, I felt it was intolerable to sit about, and must do the final thing, which was to go to London. Off I rode, without much time, against such a wind; and again I had the satisfaction in being matched with powerful things, like wind and dark. I battled, had to walk; got on; drove ahead; dropped the torch; picked it up; and so on again without any lights. Saw men and women walking together; thought you're safe and happy; I'm an outcast; took my ticket; had three minutes to spare, and then, turning the corner of the train steps, saw Leonard, coming along, bending rather, like a person walking very quick, in his mackin-

tosh. He was rather cold and angry (as perhaps was natural). And then, not to show my feelings, I went aside and did something to my bicycle. Also, I went back to the ticket office and said to the humane man there, 'It's all right. My husband has come!'"

What terror! It wells up in the throat of this fragile, terrified woman making a heroic effort against the elements in what to a less sensitive person would have been a rotten night to go to meet a commuting husband at the train.

As I read her Diary, my mind works intuitively. I begin noting and picking up clues that explain Virginia Woolf to me. I sense, without being certain from what psychic source, that she was suffering a crisis. Following Carl Jung's idea that every crisis is a spiritual crisis, it seems to me that her suffering was a yearning for reconciliation with the divine within. True, by choosing her class, her husband, and her group (Bloomsbury) in which mystical experience was not acceptable, she had set it up so that the one thing that was most important became impossible for her except through death. Nevertheless, her settling in the Downs was a symbol of her seeking for the nurturing Mother Earth she had felt herself deprived of since her natural mother's death when she was a child.

Virginia Woolf was separated from the church not only intellectually but physically. How poignant that her workroom was a small cottage nestled into the Sussex flint wall of a charming if damp Anglican church back of Monk's House. She could see the view to the east only over the church's stone cross. Even Monk's House itself — perhaps named by an estate-agent but apt for that peculiarly celibate marriage — symbolized her separation from wholeness. For Virginia Woolf to retire at night she had to leave the warmth of her deep vile green living-room decorated by her sister Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant, go through the dining-room, the kitchen, then outside through a low door, up two stone steps, down a short walkway to her bedroom, which was completely closed off from the main house. This separation reflects the non-integration of the internal in her mind:

"As a child, then, my days, just as they do now, contained a large portion of this cotton wool, this non-being. Week after week passed at St. Ives and nothing made any dint upon me. Then, for no reason that I know about, there was a sudden violent shock; something happened so violently that I have remembered it all my life. I will give a few instances. The first: I was fighting with Thoby (her brother) on the lawn. We were pommelling each other with our fists. Just as I raised my fist to hit him, I felt: why hurt another person? I dropped my hand instantly, and stood there, and let him beat me. I remember the feeling. It was a feeling of hopeless sadness. It was as if I became aware of something terrible; and of my own powerlessness. I slunk off alone, feeling horribly depressed. The second instance was also in the garden at St. Ives. I was looking at the flower bed by the front door; 'That is the whole,' I said. I was looking at a plant with a spread of leaves; and it seemed suddenly plain that the flower itself was a part of the earth; that a ring enclosed what was the flower; and that was the real flower; part earth part flower."

This holistic experience — in the course of which she had switched into

her right brain and let the completeness and complexity of experience reach her — was what she was seemingly on other occasions fleeing from, what she had set up Leonard to protect her from.

ARCHETYPICALLY, one's mate is the self in an opposite sex reflection. What view of her male aspect did Virginia Woolf hold that she should marry a middle class, Jewish, intellectual, workaholic, and paternalistic patronizer who, according to all accounts, was "a saint" in his care of her? In answer to this I cannot do better than quote Jung:

"There are subtler things than the banal lapse of heroes. I once made the acquaintance of a very venerable personage — in fact, one might easily call him a saint. I stalked around him for three whole days, but never a mortal failing did I find in him. My feeling of inferiority grew ominous, and I was beginning to think seriously of how I might better myself. Then on the fourth day, his wife came to consult me . . . . Well, nothing of the sort has ever happened to me since. But this I did learn: that any man who becomes one with his persona can cheerfully let all disturbances manifest themselves through his wife without her noticing it, though she pays for her self-sacrifice with a bad neurosis."

If it is true that Virginia Woolf created Leonard Woolf to keep herself in chrysalis, it does not necessarily mean he was a villain. Much as the alcoholic is often the alcoholic for a whole family, or a scapegoat for an entire town, Leonard was the repository of Virginia's fear of the divine. While sitting in Monk's House, in the dripping greenhouse looking out over the rain-soaked lawns, I wondered whether Virginia had created Leonard and his protection as a way of keeping herself from fully experiencing the depths of her spirituality. Much of this is associated for her with her mother.

"It is perfectly true that she obsessed me, in spite of the fact that she died when I was thirteen, until I was forty-four. Then one day walking round Tavistock Square, I made up, as I sometimes make up my books, *To the Lighthouse*; in a great, apparently involuntary rush. One thing burst into another. Blowing bubbles out of a pipe gives the feeling of the rapid crowd of ideas and scenes which blew out of my mind, so that my lips seemed syllabling of their own accord as I walked. What blew the bubbles? Why then? I have no notion. But I wrote the book very quickly; and when it was written, I ceased to be obsessed with my mother. I no longer hear her voice; I do not see her."

Yet the experience Virginia Woolf had at her mother's deathbed was never resolved in her writing:

"Perhaps it was the next evening that Stella took me into the bedroom to kiss mother for the last time. . . . Her face looked immeasurably distant, hollow and stern. When I kissed her it was like kissing cold iron. Whenever I touch cold iron the feeling comes back to me — the feeling of mother's face, iron cold and granulated. I started back. Then Stella stroked her cheek, and undid a button on her nightgown. When she came up to the nursery later she said to me, 'Forgive me. I saw you were afraid.' She had noticed I had started. When Stella asked me to forgive her for having given me that shock, I cried —

we had been crying off and on all day — and said, 'When I see mother, I see a man sitting with her.' For certainly it was true that when she said 'Forgive me,' and thus made me visualize mother, I seemed to see a man sitting bent on the edge of the bed."

Occurrences which now are commonplace in the literature of the dead and dying seemed to the Victorian mind a hallucination.

ALTHOUGH there are many references to hallucinations and 'things in the garden' in Virginia Woolf's own and others' references to her illnesses, her biographers offer no explicit explanation. As I read, first, her nephew Quentin Bell's biography with all its openly acknowledged omissions, then Leonard Woolf's memoir written in his old age, and then her voice itself in *Moments of Being*, never intended by her for publication, I speculate whether she was a victim not of her "madness" but of the interpretation of it by herself, her closest associates, and her times.

Virginia Woolf was at the mercy of a rational, materialistic world when all her being and spirit was seeking a higher level:

"A cold, grey blowy day made memorable by the sight of a kingfisher and by my sense waking early of being again visited by the 'spirit of delight.'"

And:

"And so I go on to suppose that the shock-receiving capacity is what makes me a writer. I hazard the explanation that a shock is at once in my case followed by the desire to explain it. I feel that I have had a blow; but it is not, as I thought as a child, simply a blow from an enemy hidden behind the cotton wool of daily life; it is or will become a revelation of some order; it is a token of some real thing behind appearances; and I make it real by putting it in words. It is only by putting it into words that I make it whole; this wholeness means that it has not lost its power to hurt me; it gives me, perhaps by doing so I take away the pain, a great delight to put the severed parts together. Perhaps this is the strongest pleasure known to me. It is the rapture I get when in writing I seem to be discovering what belongs to what; making a scene come right; making a character come together. From this I reach what I might call a philosophy: at any rate it is a constant idea of mine; that behind the cotton wool is hidden a pattern; that we — I mean all human beings — are connected with this; that the whole world is a work of art; that we are parts of the work of art. *Hamlet* or a Beethoven quartet is truth about this vast mass that we call the world. But there is no Shakespeare, there is no Beethoven; certainly and emphatically there is no God; we are the words; we are the music; we are the thing itself."

Familiar imagery in mystical literature — cotton wool, holographic knowing, the oneness of the whole:

"I believe these illnesses are in my case — how shall I express it? partly mystical. Something happens in my mind. It refuses to go on registering impressions. It shuts itself up. It becomes chrysalis. I lie quite torpid, often with acute physical pain — as last year; only discomfort this. Then suddenly, something springs."

As I walked down the lane from Monk's House to the River Ouse, where she put rocks in her pockets and threw herself one gray spring day, I saw the haze she saw and felt for her who was so distressed by children's voices as they played ball in the village lot next to her garden. I wondered at the pain she felt as she gazed at the cross immediately behind her room. In throwing herself into the Ouse, seemingly in despair over the approaching war, wasn't she throwing herself into the unconscious in a way so irrefutable, into a place so dark, that one could see only the divine?

A Dietary Note on Virginia Woolf

AS one reads about Virginia Woolf, it is difficult not to be dismayed by the quantity of food stuffed down her, like a French goose, when she was ill. As she lay in bed in isolation, in that separate cell in Monk's House, her London doctor prescribed and Leonard Woolf fed her chocolate puddings, sweet buns, heavy cream, milk, to build her up — the last things a body purifying itself needs, according to modern nutrition. Recent scientific research confirms that such a diet is conducive to the classic "sugar blues," to hypoglycaemia, and to arthritis. In other words, that it made her worse. — G.A.

Gregory Bateson

by STEVEN HELMLING

IN 1972, at the age of 68, Gregory Bateson published *Steps To An Ecology Of Mind*, a collection of essays and other writings that spanned his career. He confessed in the book's forward that he had only just begun to see how lines of thought developed over forty years came together, and promised another book that would offer a more systematic exposition of the "ecology of mind" he had spent a lifetime thinking about. His next book, *Mind And Nature*, delivered on that promise.

The essays in *Steps To An Ecology Of Mind* touch on anthropology, psychiatry, schizophrenia, animal behavior, primitive art and dance, alcoholism, dreams, learning evolution, genetics, cybernetics, entropy, information theory, game theory, epistomology. The last item in this series is Bateson's real subject, for which all other subjects serve as medium. As a scientist, Bateson has done plenty of original research, but observing and reporting new facts interest him less than seeking the most comprehensive way of understanding them. Implicit everywhere in his work is a critique of the mythology of "facts" which remains the crippling legacy of nineteenth-century science: the mythology that can only regard facts as all of the same sort of importance. To distinguish between kinds of importance, Bateson has elaborated a theory of contexts from the insights of Collingwood and the Russell-Whitehead theory of logical types, which distinguishes between "levels of abstraction." Bateson's thinking is abstractive, always seeking the explanation that embraces most; he seeks pattern rather than detail, the "meta pattern," or the "pattern that connects." No respecter of "fields," he specializes rather in the astonishing and illuminating juxtaposition of diverse areas of speculation.

It's not hard to imagine that such easy movement across intellectual boundaries has discomfited many a more stationary enquirer, and Bateson's nomadic career, drifting across continents and oceans from institution to institution, initiating projects for which funding then dried up, possibly has as much to do with the distrust of his colleagues as with his own curiosity, impatience with niches, and unwillingness to force conclusions on matters that kept themselves in question. Bateson makes no concessions to the superstitions of a positivist age: he occasionally uses words like "wisdom," "love,' "hate," even "God" and "truth." He asks his reader to consider how problems raised by such notions as "irony" and "meaning" might aid scientific understanding. He remarks that the scientist who can't discuss intelligently the difference between "metaphor" and "sacrament" isn't equipped for serious work. He wonders aloud why laboratory investigators persist in their ignorance of Russell and Whitehead's *Principia Mathematica*, and proceeds to talk as if they're better informed about Aristotle, Aquinas, Bacon, Descartes, Newton, Berkeley. To him it is self-evident that a scientist cannot think

Philadelphia Museum of Art
The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection

without an understanding of the implications and history of such philosophical issues as substance, universals, transcendence and immanence, realism, nominalism, idealism. At one point he commences a discussion of contemporary scientific issues by noting that they were first raised in chapter one of Genesis: "The problem of the origin and nature of matter is summarily dismissed. The passage deals at length with the problem of the origin of order." He once told a roomful of biologists that Lamarck, presented in most intellectual histories as the buffoon who just missed being Darwin because of his deluded belief in the inheritance of acquired characteristics, was "probably the greatest biologist who ever lived."

The philosopher of science must of course be its critic. Bateson exercises the option to be its satirist as well. He observes, for example, that such hallowed explanatory principles as "gravity" and "instinct" are inventions, not discoveries, of a kind with the sleepicative power improvised by the doctoral candidate in Moliere when quizzed on the "causes" of sleep. Such explanatory devices, Bateson wryly remarks, themselves exercise a sleepicative power on genuine inquiry. "Instinct," for example, is alleged to explain behavior that is 1) unlearned, 2) not the result of rational figuring out, 3) common to other individuals of the same species, and 4) persisted in even under circumstances where it is inappropriate. Do these four criteria define instinct? No, says Bateson. They delimit rather the circumstances under which scientists begin to use the word "instinct." It's tempting, he goes on, to say that the scientists, behaving thus, are obeying instinct: actually, they're obeying something else: "an explanatory principle — like 'gravity' or 'instinct' [is] a sort of conventional agreement between scientists to stop trying to explain things at a certain point."

T.E. Hulme once remarked that the history of ideas amounted to the history of six or seven metaphors. At about the same time, scientists were beginning to acknowledge that a "complementarity" (Niels Bohr's word) had to be admitted between mutually contradictory but equally indispensable explanatory models. And the philosopher R.G. Collingwood was arguing that science's long-standing assumption of an unchanging universe was giving way to an assumption of universal flux and evolution: "nature" was becoming "history." Bateson is not the first to perceive that science is an imaginative enterprise, but he's the only scientist I know of to take that perception and its implications as his proper field of investigation. Bateson argues that science, like the other arts, must strive to be conscious of the metaphors that govern it; delusion opens up its abysses when convention is mistaken for instinct, just as (he implies) grace may attend us when conviction becomes sufficiently intense to raise metaphor to sacrament.

In the casual remark that Lamarck was "probably the greatest biologist who ever lived," Bateson appears to be savoring the role of the heretic, quietly indulging his flair for the outrageous. But he is also introducing a central theme: *mind.* (The word appears in the titles of Bateson's two most recent books.) The classical biology Lamarck inherited had pictured a *scala naturae* descending from Supreme Mind at the top through a hierarchy of living and

non-living things; Lamarck, says Bateson, turned that "ladder of explanation" upside down: "Up to Lamarck, mind was the explanation of the biological world. But, hey presto, the question now arose: Is the biological world the explanation of mind? That which was the explanation now became that which was to be explained." In the event, of course, the classical Great Chain of Being was replaced not by Lamarck's inverted ladder of explanation, but by a materialistic monism, which banished, in effect, the notion of hierarchy, thus ejecting also consideration of such phenomena as pattern and order. Bateson points out that both Freud and Darwin are visibly theorizing with the first law of thermodynamics in mind, and ignoring the second law. (Their thinking becomes fuzzy but more interesting, and some disciples tune out, at precisely the point where they attempt to evade the constraints of their theoretical model.) Not until this century did cybernetics and the information sciences make pattern, order, and hierarchy scientifically thinkable again, as information and negative entropy.

To Bateson it seems natural to link the theoretical models elaborated by cybernetics to the problem of "mind." Bateson conceives of mind not as an inventory of contents (the sort of criteria that would distinguish "mind" from "brain"), but as interacting and self-regulating functions. He notes that "information" ("a difference that makes a difference") is an index of quality, not quantity; of order, not energy; and that it enters a given system not as the kinetic impact of external events but as a transform of those events. The system, the feedback loop which incorporates, transmits, and may to some extent control such "information" exhibits behavior that deserves to be called "mental." Thus an ecosystem, an arms race, an evolutionary process, an inflationary spiral, can all be described as processes in which ideas (bits of information) aggregate and interact, sometimes checking, sometimes accelerating each other. As these examples suggest, "mind" is not necessarily presumed to be sane — it was Bateson, after all, who authored the "double bind" theory of mental illness. It is the patterns of relationship and force that form the shape of the boulder, the motion of the wave, that can usefully be talked about as "minds."

Bateson is not a thinker to meet secondhand. To suggest what his work is about is not to suggest the beauty and rigor of his thinking and writing. His arguments resist summary by reason of their deftness and complexity, his writing by reason of its utter lucidity, economy, and freedom from jargon. (When special vocabulary helps, Bateson explains his terms, and his books generally have glossaries.) His prose can turn novelistic to describe, say, the events of a case history: Samuel Butler is relevant here, because Bateson praises the author of *The Way Of All Flesh* as "the first analyst of a schizophrenogenic family." The incongruity between the simplicity with which Bateson writes and the complexity and beauty of the arguments he advances is a dazzlement all to itself. In addition to expository writing, he has written a number of "metalogues," or dialogues about, among other things, dialogue, communication. These observe their own progress through or

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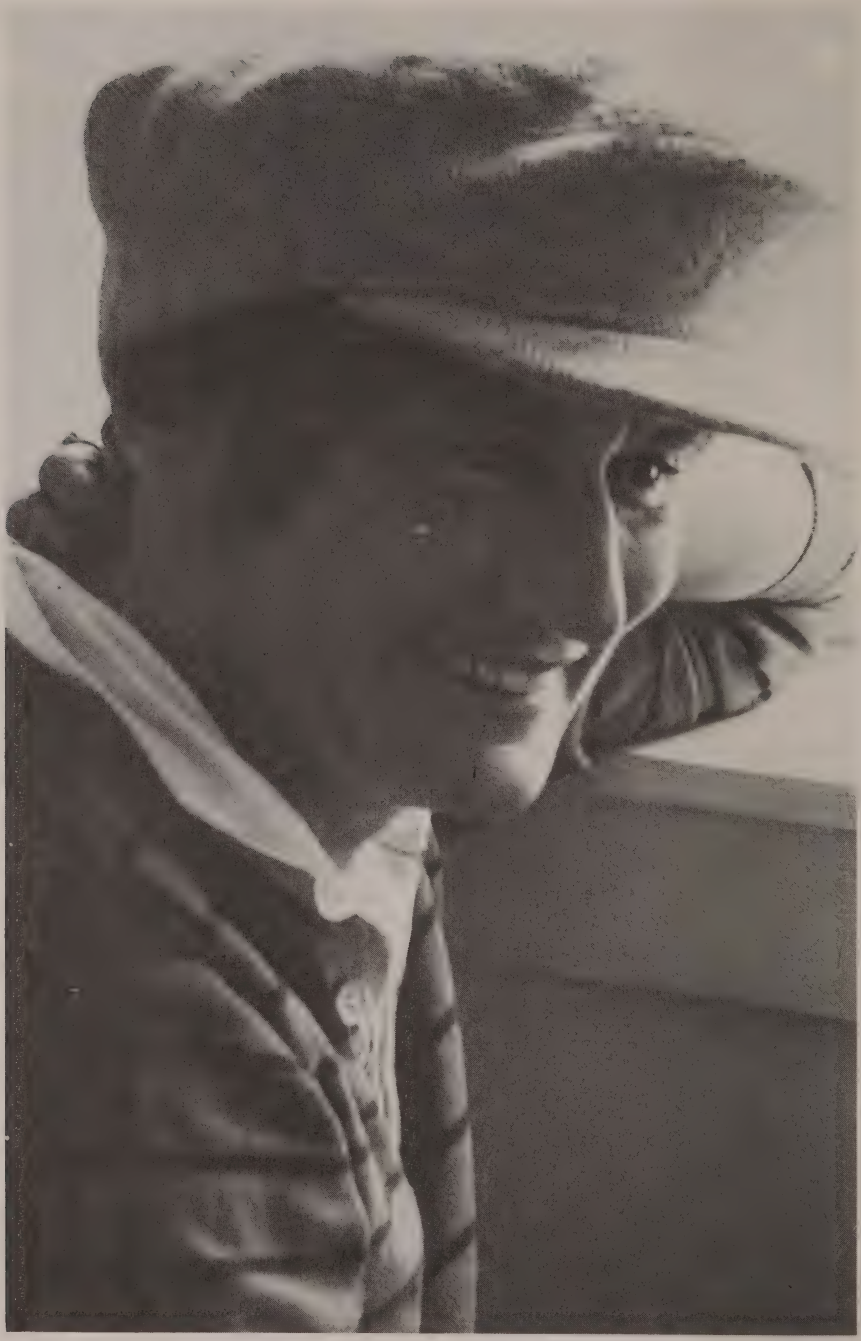


A painter of Cape Cod

Anne Packard

by GARNETTE ARLEDGE

ANNE PACKARD knows her wellspring is Provincetown on Cape Cod. In this mixed-media combination of old fishing-town and art colony, plus "P-town's" own garden-variety tourist scene, she gathers herself — here is her source, her inspiration, her strength, and the subject of many of her paintings.

Her work — evocative of the primeval elements of earth, air, fire, and water — focuses on the inner life of the seer. And the seer, one time the artist, one time the viewer, brings life to the art on her canvases. Anne Packard skillfully and meaningfully gives her strength to the colors, to the scene, then steps back and lets the painting speak.

She does this when visitors descend on her studio. She swoops out onto the deck, arms open in welcome, and ushers even first-time viewers into her world of sun, sea, light, mist, and water.

Her studio, rocking slightly with high tide, rests on seaweed-encrusted pilings in the bare muddy harbor of the famous art colony. She has known this milieu since childhood as the daughter of early twentieth-century impressionist Max Bohm, who was one of the first settlers to be attracted there by the ocean, the light, and the convivial fellowship. In Packard's paintings — whether of Cape dunes, the sea, and sand, or of the deep green forests of Brittany, where

she worked last year — the light lies limpid.

Escorting the curious around the studio is nothing new to her. From the beginning, when she was on the sidewalk-and-show circuit, she has considered that part of the whole art idea is to make the artist's work available. When she began painting acrylics on driftwood seventeen years ago, she diligently showed her work. She was married then and raising five children. But when the time came to choose a place of her own, she zoomed back to Provincetown.

"There was nowhere else," she says. "I packed the children and rented this place for the summer and didn't know where we would live after the lease was up in August. At the end of the summer, a friend who was encouraging me to work harder loaned me his house for two winters. That was Robert Motherwell, but I don't want to use his coattails."

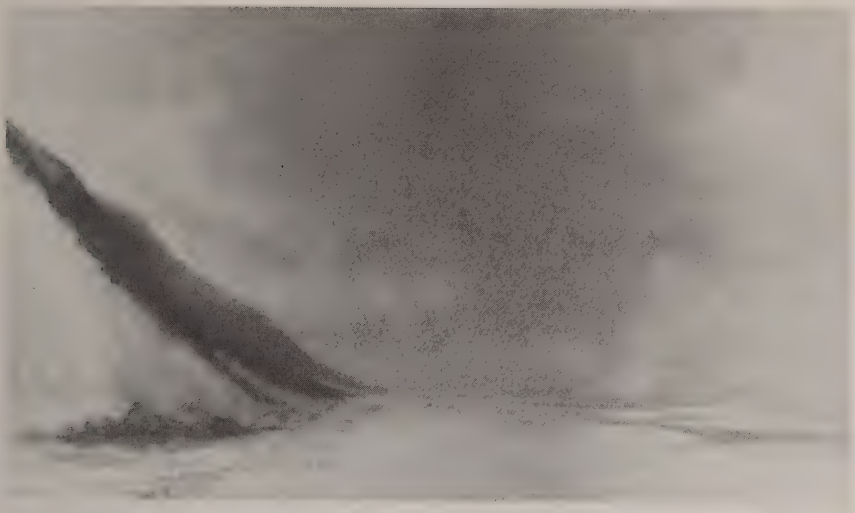
During the summers, she hung her work on the picket fence outside. Summer people strolled by and many bought. She was doing miniatures then — small scenes quickly dashed off — and the prices were reasonable. Her paintings began being collected in multiples by people who loved them. She kept on working, supporting her children, putting those who wanted it through college, and eventually was able to buy the house.

And a special house it is, one that honors her drive and creativity, that accommodates itself to her dawn working-schedule, as the light breaks over the ocean, catching the lighthouse which inspired Edward Hopper. The house is labyrinthine, cluttered with stacks of canvases, frames, tubes of paint, full of the salt-laden air and the screeches of the gulls that wheel overhead. In the 1930's Eugene O'Neill was writing plays there and the Provincetown Players performed in the living-room. . . . It gives shelter and something more to Packard now. She is a strong woman who through hard work and discipline has painted her soul on canvas. She has made a life for herself there out of a triumph over private tragedies. Inner strength and will have been rewarded with inner peace. That is what Packard's paintings are all about: a woman, her life, and her solitude.

In winter, after the tourists and gawkers have departed, she finds a complete at-one-ment with herself there. It is a place where isolation necessarily becomes celebration. "Ten houses this way and twelve that way there is no one," she says. "We heat the whole house with a wood stove. I have a studio elsewhere during the winter. I walk the dunes, the beach, and I look and look and then I come back and paint. These large paintings are a departure for me."

She gestures to a painting on the floor. Her palette lies to one side, the brushes clean and ready for work. "I am a visceral, tactile person," she says. "I like to really get into the paint. It gets all over me. I love the feel of it on my hands. I enjoy it. I have a friend, a poet, who tells me I should respect my muse more."

Speaking of her early-morning schedule, she says, "I don't have a ritual unless it's drinking a cup of coffee and reading the stock quotations. I just like to get up before sunrise and work for four hours before the kids are up. After showing people around the studio, it takes about two hours for me to get back within. I do have to get back within to paint."



Two paintings by Anne Packard: "Nauset Beach" (above) and "Seascape #4"

The Beatles

by BRUCE NIXON

TODAY, of course, everything is different. Such a thing wouldn't happen now, at least not on the same scale. Rock and roll has changed; just about everybody seems to be thinking about business these days: what looks good, what sounds right, what sells. It was different in the 'sixties. You could get away with more. Looking back, it almost seems strange.

This is a story about a band that evolved very quickly and expressed its changes in its music. For a while, the music was new. It promised something different, something special. As for the band, they were making it up as they went along.

Looking back, it does seem strange — one of the most well-known rock and roll bands of the day going to India to sit at the feet of the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who was then virtually unknown. For a time, the things that they found in India filtered back into their music, in elliptical lyrics and dreamy melodies that bespoke a new spirituality mingled with psychedelic mysticism and imagery. They brought back the music of India, too, introducing sitarist Ravi Shankar to rock audiences in England and the United States, and adding Eastern instruments to their own recorded music. Their popularity and fame gave the diverse spiritual movements of the 'sixties a credibility by the simple fact of their involvement; they endowed these things with a legitimacy and importance. Many of the people who were involved with those

movements thought that the music would give these spiritual issues a wider reach and a greater impact; they were the messengers, the advance guard of change.

Today, *Sargeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* is among the most well-known pop recordings to come out of the 'sixties. It has sold millions of copies and the Beatles remain one of the most popular bands of the past two decades. To a certain extent, they influenced the moods of their times; to perhaps a far greater extent, they were shaped by the things that were going on around them, and they reflected those things in their music.

Songs like "Within You Without You", "A Day In The Life" and "Fixing A Hole" from *Sargeant Pepper's* in 1967, "Blue Jay Way", "Strawberry Fields Forever", "I Am The Walrus" and "All You Need Is Love" from *Magical Mystery Tour* later the same year, and "While My Guitar Gently Weeps" and "Revolution" from the so-called "white album" in 1968 — the music radiates the sort of hip, loose, slightly stoned feeling of the spiritual side of the 'sixties culture. For a while there, something really seemed to be happening. It was all quite serious: the Beatles, transformed from the four moptops, in long, flowing hair and beards, bright-colored outfits, beads, and wire-rimmed glasses, the words of Indian gurus on their lips spoke of a desire to get back in touch with things: with self, with others, with a larger force at work in the universe. The songs were often beautiful, too.

Today, of course, everything is different. The Beatles, after several well-documented years of disharmony, disbanded in early 1971. John Lennon, after three or four years of recording earnest solo albums which carried on a relentless self-searching and social optimism and self-effacement, retired. He was shot and killed in Manhattan in late 1980, within weeks of completing his first solo album in many years. Paul McCartney plays slick pop music with his band, Wings. Ringo Starr makes fine workman-like albums and is a skillful comic actor. Only guitarist George Harrison, who was responsible for many of the spiritual themes in the Beatles' music, continues to work among the ideas and teachings of the Eastern religions, using matters of spiritual consciousness as the material of his music. His earlier passion seems somewhat subdued; were he not a former Beatle, his music probably would draw little attention on today's rock marketplace. Alone, he shows only a degree of the Beatles' collective musical imagination.

During the 'sixties, Bob Dylan also sang of self-exploration, of a keenly adventurous consciousness, of the moral responsibilities that people have to themselves and to each other. His, too, was a voice of the times. There were other voices, as well. There was the cute, druggy mysticism of the Moody Blues and Donovan. John McLaughlin and Carlos Santana, both fine, often brilliant guitarists, became disciples of Sri Chinmoy in the early 'seventies, and McLaughlin tried at one point to fuse his own rock-rooted playing with Eastern devotional music. The Rolling Stones, who answered the popular response to *Sargeant Pepper's* with their own bizarre *Their Satanic Majesties Request* were heard. Some, such as the Grateful Dead, Jimi Hendrix, and some of the San Francisco bands, dressed the part with long hair and colorful,

dazzling costumes. Free-floating electric improvisations reflected the sense of freedom and individualism and the feeling of a higher, more extravagant consciousness that accompanied the psychedelic movement. The LSD mystics and the young seeker-seers who made Eastern culture a part of the youthful popular culture often marched to the beat of rock and roll.

The Beatles were not really the first. They were the biggest.

The Beatles began inconspicuously, as many rock bands begin; playing in small clubs a spare, rhythmic music which borrowed heavily from black American rockers and rhythm and blues bands, tightening up their sound over simple rock chord changes. People could dance and drink to this music. It was this clean, spare rhythmic feel that was a trademark of the Beatles' music when the band arrived in the United States in 1963.

The climate was right. A band that hit as big as the Beatles did could pretty much follow its own nose. If the anti-war movement and the restlessness on urban college campuses was changing a lot of peoples' political consciousness, the buddng psychedilic movement and some of the more visible holdouts from Beat days — Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert, Allen Ginsberg, Gary Snyder, even Aldous Huxley — were making people more aware of issues of psychic and spiritual consciousness. The rock and rollers supplied the soundtrack.

A spiritual movement definitely was afoot. Ashrams were apearing in the cities, and Hare Krishna chanters were on the streets. Every city bookstore had growing racks of works describing and defining Eastern and Oriental religions and philosophies and the literature of the drug culture. College students threw the *I Ching*. Gurus like the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi were building following in the United States and Europe; centers for programs like Transcendental Meditation opened in large cities around the country. The quality of the hallucinogens on the streets was generally high, and a body of writing on the subject mushroomed. First, there were books that described and tried to explain the spiritual effects of psychedelic drugs, and then more sophisticated outgrowths from more scholarly writers like Alan Watts and Carlos Castaneda.

And the Beatles sang, "All You Need Is Love".

Today, it's hard to imagine a younger and more contemporary band recording the sort of lyrics that George Harrison wrote to "Within You Without You" on *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band:*

> We were talking about the space between us all
> And the people who hide themselves
> Behind a wall of illusion
> Never glimpse the truth, then it's too late
> When they pass away
> We were talking about the love we all could share
> When we find it — to try our best to hold it there —
> With our love, with our love
> We could save the world, if they only knew . . .
> We were talking about the love that's gone so cold
> And the people
> Who gain the world and lose their souls —
> They don't know — they can't see —

Are you one of them?
When you've seen beyond yourself
Then you may find peace of mind is waiting there
And the time will come when you see we're all one
And life flows on within you and without you.

And yet, paradoxically, this music may have been written *to* certain listeners, rather than *for* them. In a way, it was a fairly exclusive crowd. Those caught up in the movements of the time — the political movements, as well as the spiritual and drug movements — looked to artists like the Beatles or Bob Dylan for reassurance. The music was a guide and many people were willing to put a lot of trust in the music, but it *was* reassuring, it let people know they were doing the right things. It soothed uncertainty, gave people a cultural core of their own, and reminded them that they were not alone in the search. The various movements and trends were very important to people at the time, and very real. To some, they still are.

By early 'seventies, a good deal had changed. The power certainly was no longer in the hands of the youth culture. The Vietnam war was over and the May Day demonstrations in Washington, D.C. in the spring of 1971 were a sort of last hurrah of the anti-war movement, an end-of-the-semester party. Timothy Leary was in jail, others on the run; there were no more free rock concerts. It was big business now, not the music of the people. A good deal seemed to grow out of the movements of the passing decade, though. Much was written about the new secular gurus — whether they were frivolous child gods like Maharaj Ji; or est; or even the primal scream psychiatry which attracted John Lennon for a time. Back-to-the-land movements and communal experiments were quietly taking place. The seeking was different, diffuse, going on at a much lower level.

Quite a few people have spent a lot of time and energy figuring out what happened during the 'sixties, and what it all meant. That's probably a whole other story, though. Time went by. Bob Dylan followed the trends of the times as his music became increasingly introspective and personal; he was following his own path, no longer a public voice. The four Beatles, of course, went their own separate ways, more often than not just blending rather inconspicuously into the broadening popular music milieu. George Harrison's three-record solo, *All Things Must Pass,* released in late 1970, just as the Beatles were publicly disbanding, was a grand philosophical gesture, but his work would finally become preachy and sophomoric.

And, from all this, one thing seems clear: the Beatles, as much as they appeared to exert an influence on their time, were actually influenced by it, complemented it, supported it, reaffirmed it, and reflected it, but failed to sustain it.

And in the end, a band of the Beatles' adventurousness and daring leaves behind more subtle effects. Today, it is unlikely that a rock band would be comfortable with the vulnerability of placing its spiritual preoccupations before its audience. There are many people who grew up and came of age during the 'sixties who do remember, however, and who carry it with them today.

Part II of an article begun in the issue of October, 1982

The Power of The Arts

by EUGENE RAUDSEPP

THERE are a host of feelings and emotions that find only meager expression in everyday life. One objective of the arts is to keep myriads of feelings alive in us and provide, at every occasion of participation and enjoyment, ever new scope for their exercise.

Let us take music as an example. Music, perhaps more than any of the other arts, formulates and mirrors feelings, moods, patterns of motion and rest, tensions and their resolutions, subtle complexes of feelings — energy, tranquility, restlessness, animation, discouragement, vitality, and so forth — that language cannot really name nor ordinary experience evoke. Music taps the inexhaustible richness of human emotional response and brings it into focus. By engaging our deeper emotional strata, our biological tension systems and rhythms, music can perform the cathartic function of releasing us from them and restore our personal balance.

With time, familiar things become jaded. It is the function of the arts to add new luster of freshness to everyday things and to help us rediscover novelty by removing the blanket of staleness. The arts accomplish this by focusing our attention on the previously unnoticed characteristics of all-too-familiar things.

Another important function of the arts is to arrest momentarily and stop the perpetual flux and flow of experience. Through the process of clarification and intensification of certain components of experience, the arts elevate them to a special level of sharpened reality. The arts concentrate the extensive in the intensive. They transform the vague and loose into the clarified and fixed. They amplify the vaguely-sensed to a point where it becomes intimately alive. They pierce the surface and lay bare its meaning. By virtue of this, they revitalize our power to perceive and to experience both more clearly and more acutely.

It is here that the arts step in and set our memories reverberating again. A vividly enjoyed aesthetic experience has the power to make our past experiences, long forgotten, surge back into the daylight of consciousness. In this way art experiences salvage precious and hallowed events from oblivion. Art experiences help us to reminisce or muse on cherished memories and to string bits of joy together to bolster our sagging moods.

Many people have testified that a thoroughly absorbing art experience gives them a sense of freedom, a feeling of liberation from encrusted habits of thought and feeling. Many claim that going to a concert or art exhibit gives them new courage and daring to embark on endeavors and ventures of their own. As can be seen from this, genuine aesthetic experience can release unsuspected new energies.

Another salutary effect of an art experience is its aftereffect — a creative feeling or mood which spills over into other activities. Sometimes the effect of an art experience is not only immediately felt but continues to work like yeast in our personalities. There is no doubt that cumulative experiences of the arts expands and frees our creative problem-solving capacities in other areas of living.

The Arts Give Us Vital Knowledge

The arts give us more significant knowledge about ourselves and the world than does almost any other discipline or branch of learning. A good novel, for example, can show us aspects of life and people of which we previously were unaware. The arts help us to understand many facets of reality which otherwise would have been lost. The knowledge-giving function of the arts is acknowledged by philosopher Irwin Edman: "The philosopher may talk analytically for a volume about immortality, but a stanza of Wordsworth or a myth of Plato's may place us in the very presence of the beautiful thing itself. A picture by Cezanne of a snow-laden tree may give us for the first time an inexpungable sense of the reality of a tree. Anna Karenina may become more real to us than a thousand women of our acquaintance. That unique and individual flavor which distinguishes reality from its shadow may very well turn out to be found among those comparatively phantom objects known as works of art." Oscar Wilde said: "Beauty is the only thing that time cannot harm. Philosophies fall away like sand, and creeds follow one another like the withered leaves of autumn; but what is beautiful is a joy for all seasons and a possession for all eternity."

An increasing number of psychologists are likewise discovering that much that is most meaningful and authentic about human nature has slipped through the meshes of their methodological nets and that the arts are there to supply the necessary missing pieces without which the puzzle of human beings would be woefully incomplete. For example, psychologists Cantril and Bumstead write: "We have frequently been troubled by the fact that both students and laymen find so many books in psychology not only insufferably dull but also unconvincing and unrewarding. The views of human nature provided by the psychologist for the student often seem to offend his sense of the dignity of man by their narrow intellectualism, while many generalizations stemming from segmented research seem either downright implausible or inconsequential. Somewhere along the line, too much of human experience has been left out of account.

"The characteristics and qualities that make human experience what it is must first be recognized before they can be described and then dealt with. It is the sensitive novelist or poet who seems so far to have done best in combining such recognition with faithful description.

"Hence, many books which deal with 'human nature' at the level of scientific conceptualization do not seem to ring true. They do not seem to describe or to explain satisfactorily the process of living as the reader knows it in terms of his own immediate firsthand experience. The result is that both the

student and layman frequently indicate that they can learn more about 'human nature' from reading good literature than from taking courses in psychology. And they are probably right."

In a similar vein philosopher Morris Weitz observes: "Art, especially literature, is capable of embodying many truthful claims about the world, mainly about the complexities and nuances of human experience, which the sciences do not make or have not made. Literature, with its capacity for communicating the succulent character of man's emotional *Existenz*, can say certain things about the nature of man that sciences, which are after all concerned with the formulation of causal generalizations, are not interested in saying. No psychologist, for example, has made the claims about human motivation in the richly concrete and complex way that a Proust or a Dostoevski has made them. Even Freud recognized this. Nor has any social philosopher exposed the sicknesses of American society in the encompassing way that American realistic novelists have done."

Great art not only rings true. It often has a revelatory power of conviction and sometimes of conversion unequalled by any other field of learning. In art we perceive persons, things, and situations more clearly than in life and as though they were in some way more real than the realities themselves. It seems that the arts have a subtler, more penetrating pipeline to reality than we normally have. To quote Irwin Edman again: "That half-lethargy, half-confusion which is the ordinary run of experience, blinds us to the 'realities' about us. The artist opens our eyes and our ears and our imaginations so that what he writes, or paints, or composes, comes to have more 'reality' for us than that clouded actual environment in which we talk and breathe." The arts remove the veils that hide the expressiveness of experienced things and convey to us the "look," the "feel," the "tang" of experience itself.

The arts enable us to enlarge the scope of our experiences. When reading a good novel, we find ourselves in situations that we could never hope to experience in reality, or we come to know many more people intimately than it would be possible to within a lifetime. In the arts we see nature much more variously and keenly than we perceive in reality; we are able to feel feelings that experience itself could perhaps never evoke. Thus the span of our days, the reaches of our thinking and feeling are increased immeasurably, thanks to works of art. Even a lifespan of a thousand years might not be sufficient to experience firsthand what we can experience in one lifetime in the arts. Thus the arts help to extend our incomplete personal lives and increase the circumference of the world we live in."

The Aesthetic Attitude

Fundamental both to the appreciation of art as well as to its creation is the aesthetic attitude. Our enjoyment of an art experience and the benefits we derive from it are keenest when the aesthetic attitude is given fullest scope. What are the characteristics of the aesthetic attitude?

The aesthetic attitude diverges radically from the attitudes we exhibit when we cope with our daily problems and environment. Most of our perceptions and values are concerned with the practical, utilitarian side of things.

(continued on inside back cover)

CONSTANCE RAMSEY *(continued from page 13)*

instruments stand to be permanently ruined. They are best thought of as alive. The wood is composed of once-breathing matter that vibrates where it once breathed when the bow is drawn across the strings. The wood thus alters its own structure at the atomic level when it vibrates. Consistency and sweetness of tone are, over time, little by little reflected in the molecular patterns of the material. If badly used, a violin will go sour, like a bitter person who has been harshly treated for too long, or like a voice that has been ill-used.

As violin makers cannot see forward long enough to hear their creations fully matured, they also must reach back in time for wood that is already well-aged before they begin to carve. The loss of the green wood's growth sap is a process that requires ten to twelve years. If there is any shrinkage of nature after the instrument has been shaped by art, the entire balance and tone can be permanently altered.

For centuries, violin makers have imitated the shape, the sounding notes of the top and bottom pieces, the scrolls, and the decorative motifs of Stradivarius' handiwork. But, although his patterns are standard, no one has been able to reproduce the sound of his instruments made between 1680 and 1737. The mystery of his masterpieces is perhaps cloaked in the brief season of seasoned wood he used. (The water may have had special properties. The violin maker himself lived to be almost one hundred years old.) It takes approximately eight weeks of solid work to make a violin, if all the materials are at hand, and a pattern already shaped. It takes about a week just to make the sides of the violin, those bent maple strips that hug the pattern. It took Constance Ramsey six weeks to make her first violin sides.

She was working in Williamsburg as a talking guide. Three hundred to two thousand people a day would come through the little workshop and stand at the front and in groups of thirty or so to listen to her tell the foregoing information in a ten-minute talk. Having delivered seven hours a day of straight talk for six months, she got her chance to learn the work she was talking about when a visitor accidently sat on the demonstration violin sides. The three master craftsmen could not take time off from their work to fashion new sides. In fact, they would argue about who would take time off to allow Constance her lunch break. She insisted *she* would make the sides by coming in before nine and working after five. She could not be stopped, but she received little help during those six weeks. Having proved herself, however, she was welcomed to the team and the craftsmen presented her the hand-illuminated diploma in gratitude for her perseverance.

When Constance took the job as a museum interpreter, she was married to a graduate student. She knew little about the history of music, nothing about violin-making or its history, and nothing about wood-working. She had played the violin once for six months as a child. She was a sculptor in wax and a restless wife, living in a small country cottage outside Williamsburg with not enough money. And she had become a sculptor because her eyes are

astonishingly large, gray-blue and expressive, her neck long, her ears shaped like f-holes, her profile striking but delicate, and her face animated even in moments of receptivity. She was a sculptor's model.

In high school in Powhatan, Virginia, Julian Bimford, a local artist, had asked her to sit for him. She watched him work with wax. At home, she began working wax herself. Having grown up with two older brothers and an older sister, she learned early to try things herself before being taught. She was sculpting before she took a class in sculpting, as she later shaped the violin sides for the demonstration instrument before the master artisans would consider teaching her their craft.

She came to Princeton to work at the Johnson Atelier because she honors the craft used in his foundry on Alexander Road. She had to curtail her formal apprenticeship after only four months, because the fumes involved in metalwork incited previously non-existent asthma. But she is free to work after hours at the foundry with the other new artisans transforming wax to metal casts. She is used to working after hours.

By the time she left Williamsburg to learn casting in Princeton, she was divorced and confused about the possibility of balancing her need to serve her talent and her desire for having and raising children. She would like to return to Williamsburg, and wonders, like all journeyers, if return is necessarily regression. She would like to welcome her former husband's child into the world. He has remarried and she hopes to bring more harmony out of that severance. She would like to work again in the musical instrument-maker's shop with her fellow artisans who taught her. She would like to be a member of a team at work and of a committed parenting relationship at home. She is in love with a man in Williamsburg, a chemist whose frisbee she caught when it flew wild as she walked home from the shop one afternoon. He has worked on a varnish for her instrument that is far better than anything she had been using. It has altered the final finish and resonance of her work.

But she feels that she cannot stay put yet, that she must keep moving for a while and that partners cannot move away from work very easily in coordination with each other. It is clear to her that her room with its work is the most reliable sustenance she has. She values what she can make over her capacity to move harmoniously through time and space with someone else. And so, at this crossroads, she does not know how she will accomplish everything she wants to do.

In wishing to return to Williamsburg to circle back like the ever-widening spiral of the chambered nautilus, she feels she could, like all natural creatures, build her own best shelter as she grows. She wants to move on. She is like so many youngest children, born late in her mother's life, restless, energetic, original. The adaptations of last children are often remarkable and often flukes. Like the bottom fish who live with the weight of the whole sea above them and the atmosphere above that, the pressure on them to be singularly themselves is greatest. Living flat, blind, armored or winged, like the blowfish and ling, the shape they take is neither so easy nor so predictable as the creatures living closer to the sun with less pressure and an easier niche and conformity available.

GARY SNYDER *(continued from page 17)*

literary scene, a disciple of Zen, Ezra Pound, Kenneth Rexroth, and life generally — a charismatic figure, as Kerouac described him: "I first saw him walking down the street in San Francisco the following week — I saw Japhy loping along in that curious long stride of the mountain climber, with a small knapsack on his back filled with books and toothbrushes and what not which was his 'goin'-to-the-city' knapsack. He wore a little goatee, strangely Oriental looking with his somewhat slanted green eyes, but he didn't look like a Bohemian at all. He was wiry, suntanned, vigorous, open, all howdies and glad talk and even yelling hello to bums on the street and when asked a question answered right off the bat from the top or the bottom of his mind I don't know which and always in a sprightly, sparkling way. 'Where did you meet Ray Smith?' they asked him when we walked into The Place. 'Oh I always meet my Bodhisattvas on the street' he yelled and ordered beers."

Japhy Ryder's joyous promise of sunny freedom was so much more attractive than the dark, compulsive motion of Dean Moriarty in *On The Road*; Snyder had something to share. There was no cloak of scholarship or aggrandisement in his pursuit of poetry, in his fascination with Oriental religion or Pacific Indian mythology — rather, he offered the possibility of living with the surety of a Zen monk and still being one of the boys, a man satisfied and self-confident in his application of spiritual values in every aspect of his life. In the years to come, Snyder would spend great periods of time in Japanese monasteries, even living for a while on a volcanic island off Southern Japan. Finally, he returned — yes, there is something peculiarly and irrevocably American in the quality of his poetry — and he seems at home, too, in a city like San Francisco, a place where the entire basement of a bookstore like City Lights is filled with the books and broadsides of Bay Area poets and writers, a place that seems to love its poets. Bruce Cook, in an otherwise forgettable book called *The Beat Generation*, provides an unforgettable image of Gary Snyder in the early '70's: Cook is walking down a narrow street with Snyder, and, to his obvious surprise, finds the poet on the sidewalk, enjoying himself thoroughly, washing his Volkswagen.

Late in 1973, I finally encountered Gary Snyder face-to-face. He was in Washington, D.C. to give a reading at the Library of Congress. Snyder appeared on the stage of the auditorium in a dark olive colored three-piece suit, well tailored, gold watch chain, a dark blue shirt, his patterned tie precisely knotted, with pointy-toed cowboy boots, wispy beard, and a long pony tail hanging down his back. His face was tanned and deeply lined, a face that knew the outdoors; his eyes danced; he smiled easily. Already, Snyder had stepped out of poetry and into the world of issues: he commented on the irony of reading in the nation's capital, in such proximity to the Pentagon; his remarkable essay, "Four Changes", a spiritual manifesto of the ecology movement, had appeared in *The Last Whole Earth Catalogue* that year; his first collection of essays, *Earth House Hold*, subtitled "Technical Notes &

Queries To Fellow Dharma Revolutionaries", had been around since 1969. His voice was confident without sounding practiced or theatrical (as Allen Ginsberg did, that same year), evenly modulated, sure-footed, convincing, natural; you were drawn to him by his sense of possessing something valuable, desirable, difficult to obtain, sublimely worth having. He projected that. Afterwards, he moved like flowing water among the academicians and librarians, the Washington literati and poetry hounds.

A handful of influences and concerns run through Gary Snyder's work like so many strands into a single common thread; in the beginning, they appeared as separate issues, but throughout the course of the work each seems to have become irrevocably part of the others, now inseparable. In a statement for the Paterson Society in 1961, Snyder wrote: "As a poet, I hold the most archaic values on earth. They go back to the late Paleolithic: the fertility of the soil, the magic of animals, the power vision in solitude, the terrifying initiation and rebirth, the love and ecstasy of the dance, the common work of the tribe. I try to hold both history and wilderness in mind, that my poems may approach the true measure of things and stand against the imbalance and ignorance of our times." The individual needs to live close to the natural world, in direct connection with it: this is the basis of true ecological values.

In the course of going back over Snyder's work, his concerns becomes increasingly more apparent. One is the mythology and ecological attitudes of the Pacific Northwest Indians: an issue in Snyder's poetry reflects the common belief of the Haida, Tlinget, Kwakiutl and other tribes that men, animals, plants, trees, all things of the world are habitations for spirits; Coyote, the mystical, shamanistic creature of Indian mythology, is one of Snyder's familiar poetic characters, and also, as in myth, the creator of mankind, namer of tribes, giver of language. Another is the philosophy and vocabulary of Buddhism, and particularly Zen; the feeling that there is nothing infinite apart from the finite, a focus on the perception and intuition rather than intellect, a distrust of conceptual thought, a love of things, humility. What seems to bind these things together is Snyder's underlying political (and rather democratic) vision, the apparent result of his youth in the Depression-era logging country of Oregon and Washington, and his later experience as a logger and forest service worker in the Pacific Northwest; from this comes that vibrant call to activism which is part of the progressive political tradition of the West Coast generally, and the still present IWW tradition in the Northwestern forest country; from this also comes the sense of individualism in Snyder's poetry, and the feeling of the necessity of being a political man. Kenneth Rexroth, in an interview with David Meltzer for *The San Francisco Poets* describing his own activism in California during the 1930's and his difficulty in accepting the communist party there because of his immersion in the West Coast political tradition, explained: "Very few of these people were orthodox Commies because the basic tradition on the West Coast was IWW. The attitude was really an anarchistic attitude. The movement stretched all the way from Seattle, where the IWW dominated the intellectual and Bohemian world in the years round the First World War and well into the twenties." Shortly

afterwards, he added, "People like Gary Snyder, over a generation later than myself, and I grew up in very similar worlds."

While Snyder exercises an essentially American imagination — his poetry is deeply rooted in the landscape of the Western states — he has taken from Japanese and Chinese poetry the form of imagery whose sensory force strikes at the mind directly. How readily he combines ideas that are seemingly at odds with each other. Speaking to David Kherdian, for the book *Six San Francisco Poets*, Snyder remarked: "As much as the books I've read, the jobs I've had have been significant in shaping me. My sense of body and language and the knowledge that intelligence and insight, sensitivity, awareness, and brilliance are not limited to educated people, or anything like it. That's why I dedicated *Riprap* to that list of fellow workers. Those were all people I'd known as seamen on the Sappa Creek, that tanker, or men I'd worked with in the woods. They were real teachers, they were all men of no education but men of great natural brilliance and life." That was 1969. In 1960, talking to editor Donald Allen for *The New American Poetry: 1945-1960,* he had said that the rhythms of his poetry "follow the rhythms of the physical work I'm doing and the life I'm leading at any given time — which makes the music in my head which creates the lines. *Riprap* is really a class of poems I wrote under the influence of the geology of the Sierra Nevadas and the daily trail crew work of picking up and placing granite stones in tight cobble patterns on hard slab. In part the line was influenced by the five and seven character line Chinese poems I'd been reading, which work like sharp blows on the mind."

This enjoyment and praise of a physical life seems rare in modern poetry. Perhaps Snyder's association with the growing ecology movement in the late '60's and early '70's was inevitable. Indeed, the idea of ecological sanity (and, in fact, the individual's ecological responsibility) is among Snyder's deeply felt poetic themes. It grows out of his sense that man is a part of the natural world and not apart from it. In such circumstances, and given his spiritual concerns, the individual in the world cannot be a user, an exploiter and manipulator, an over-consumer — these things are, in a way, anti-human.

Myths and Texts, published in 1960, is probably Snyder's most cohesive and ambitious work: it is a suite, in three sections — "Logging", "Hunting" and "Burning" — which describes what human beings do to the earth and why, a poem which finally leads to a vision of the world as a total fabric, with unity and meaning. It is a big, exciting, fresh, invigorating poem.

Physical labor, men at work, specific images of destruction of wilderness, an apprehension of nature, the ignorance and hypocrisy of those who exploit the world — these are the images of "Logging", as if some understanding of the nature of things can arise out of destruction. Snyder's various themes wash against each other.

In poem #5:

Again the ancient, meaningless
Abstractions of the educated mind.
wet feet and the campfire out.

Drop a mouthful of useless words.
— The books in the crapper
They're up to the part on Ethics now.

This is the imagination — or lack of it — that does not perceive the harm it does to the world Snyder describes in poem #12:

Sea-foam washing the limpets and barnacles
Rattling the gravel beach
Salmon up creek, bear on the bank,
Wild ducks over the mountain weaving
In a long flight south, the land of
Sea and fir trees with the pine-dry
Sage-flat country to the east.

These lines, followed by the comment, "Han-shan could have lived here", suggest that a natural world is based on harmony. A violation of harmony takes place when man struggles to take from the world. In poem #12:

The D8 tears through piss-fir,
Scrapes the seed pine
chipmunks flee,
A black ant carries an egg
Aimlessly from the battered ground.
Yellowjackets swarm and circle
Above the crushed dead log, their home.

But sympathy for the men — coming from Snyder's political instincts — appears as regularly as scenes of destruction in this section. In poem #7:

Reduced by the advent of chainsaws
To chopping off knots at the landing:
"I don't have to take this kind of shit,
Another twenty years
and I'll tell 'em to shove it"
(he was sixty-five then)
"Thousands of boys shot and beat up
For wanting a good bed, good pay,
decent food, in the woods—"
No one knew what it meant:
"Soldiers of discontent".

Or poem #5:

"We rule you" all crowned or be-Homburged heads
"We fool you" those guys with P.H.D.s
a big picture of K. Marx with an axe
"Where I cut one off it will never grow again."
O, Karl would it be true
I'd put my saw to work for you
& the wicked social tree would fall right down.

Or poem #12:

Men who hire men to cut groves
Kill snakes, build cities, pave fields,

Believe in God but can't
Believe their own senses
Let them alone Gautama. Let them lie.

And the section ends in a mood of hope, with a closing promise of renewal for nature and man, in the image of the Lodgepole pine whose cones are impervious to fire, opening to grow after the forest has been destroyed:

Lodgepole
cone/seed waits for fire
And then thin forests of silver grey.

On a barren landscape, "Hunting" opens:

I sit without thoughts by the log-road
Hatching a new myth
Watching the water dogs
the last truck gone.

This is the task of "Hunting", and Buddhist vocabulary offers a possibility of hope for understanding. In the final lines of the section, Snyder writes:

Meaning: compassion
Agents: man and beast, beasts
Got the Buddha nature
All but
Coyote.

The final section, "Burning", takes its title from the Buddha's Fire Sermon; the religious is the next stage of human activity, by which the meaning of life is illuminated. A new landscape emerges. The conciousness behind the poems seeks enlightenment. Images of Buddhism and particularly Zen are everywhere. The poet is returned into the web of life.

Up through the mid-sixties, Gary Snyder enjoyed remarkable poetic freedom. He traveled between the United States and Japan — where he studied under Oda Sesso Roshi, and, in fact, did take up residence for a time. During those years, his work was dissemminated through small journals and literary magazines (with a few surprise appearances in heavyweights like Atlantic Monthly and Evergreen), and his books were issued by small regional presses; *Riprap* was published by Origin Press in 1959 (the Cold Mountain poems were not added until 1965 when another edition was issued by Four Seasons Foundation in San Francisco), while *Myths & Texts* first appeared on the West Coast in 1960 on Totem Press (and many of the verse already had been printed in the likes of Ark, Bussei, Galley Sail Review, Jabberwock, the Needle and other equally obscure literary journals). Snyder was without commercial pressure. He was free to do as he pleased in his poetry; the thematic synthesis he explored was eclectic (though quite naturally balanced) and idiosyncratic, and it seemed to appeal to a small loyal following on the West Coast.

In 1968, Gary Snyder was big-time; *Back Country* was issued by New Directions (which also publishes William Carlos Williams, Henry Miller, John Hawkes, Kenneth Patchen, Ezra Pound, and others) and Snyder was officially legitimate as an American man-of-letters. It was only a matter of time before

the scholars and academics began wading through his work.

Regarding Wave, another poetry collection, appeared in 1970, and then *Turtle Island* won a Pulitzer Prize in 1974. In this later work, Snyder refines and extends his style: some of it is brilliant; some of it is boring. In any case, he speaks with a more integrated voice. The influences are not so obvious as they once were. I prefer the early work: it seems more direct, more captivating, with less attention to sophistication of craft; as a reader, I feel more immediately in touch with Snyder's interests and energies. What is evident throughout his work, however, is that Snyder is inclined to *do* what he feels is right rather than *tell* people what he thinks *they* should do.

This recent title — *The Real Work* — apparently comes from a line in a poem called "I Went Into The Maverick Bar", included in *Turtle Island.* It is a fairly obvious poem which describes the way in which people judge other people by appearances. Snyder, the hippie, goes into a redneck bar in New Mexico and is snubbed by the cowboy patrons. In the closing lines, he concludes:

I recalled when I worked in the woods
and the bars of Madras, Oregon.
That short haired joy and roughness —
America — your stupidity.
I could almost love you again.
We left — onto the freeway shoulders —
under the tough old stars—
In the shadow of bluffs
I came back to myself,
To the real work, to
"What is to be done."

No question mark. Some readers have felt, I imagine, that Snyder is essentially a nature poet; he does share a sense of humility, and an openness of spirit and imagination with many nature writers. He distrusts abstraction. He is drawn to mythology and its inherent levels of meaning. But his profound interest in Zen and a truly spiritual life (which he does share with other West Coast poets, notably Rexroth and Philip Whalen, and the beats generally) gives his proclivity for the natural world extraordinary depth and meaning.

In his ecological concerns, Snyder is not simply a conservationist. There are reasons for conservation beyond clean air and clean water, and they lie in a desire for a sense of oneness between the individual consciousness and the cosmos. This is true ecology, is it not? True ecological practices will arise naturally from it. And so, this is the real work.

In *Earth House Hold*, from the journal of his time as a fire lookout in the mountains of Washington State during the '50's, Snyder wrote:

What happens all winter; the wind drifting snow; clouds
wind, and mountains — repeating
this is what always happens here,
and the photo of a young female torso hung in the lookout window,
in the foreground. Natural against natural, beauty.
Zazen *non-life an art: mountain watching.*

GREGORY BATESON *(continued from page 27)*

around some tangle of (possibly unnamed) problems. Bateson explains, "Not only do the participants discuss the problem, but the structure of the conversation as a whole is also relevant to the same subject." He adds that this problem isn't always met.

Still, the metalogue called "Why Do Things Get In A Muddle?" is continuously threatened with muddle by the cross-purposes of the interlocutors, while "Why Do Things Have Outlines?" keeps shifting its ground as it entertains questions like "Do conversations have outlines?"

Every sentence Bateson writes testifies that cogency requires clarity. Now and then Blake is quoted: "Truth can never be told so as to be understood, and not be believ'd." Bateson recognizes that the obligation this implies is all the writer's and he has been at pains for over forty years to make himself understood and believed not by Blakeans, but by scientists. The author he most reminds me of is Kenneth Burke, especially the Burke of *A Grammar of Motives.* Bateson's writing is less excited, less promiscuous in its feats of association, concentrated and deliberate where Burke's is more rambunctiously energetic. But the two are comparable in their clarity, range, and comprehensiveness, and they often seem to be attacking the same problems from different vantage points. Each has cultivated an explanatory model — Bateson's cybernetics, Burke's "dramatistic metaphor" — so complex and rich as to enable virtually unbounded speculation. Master themes — Bateson's persistant interest in paradox, Burke's "perspective by incongruity" — dovetail uncannily. Each acknowledges the fictiveness of all argument, including his own; each evidences, indeed, a playful sense of manipulating an expository calculus, on whose sliding scales of discourse neither has any self-regarding *angst* about locating himself.

Cybernetics, entropy, and information theory already sound like yesterday's conjure words, no doubt, although no one has treated them more suggestively or lucidly than Bateson, in essays written thirty years ago. Still, the daily, weekly, monthly, and quarterly discharges of printed matter seem never to send past any word of him. If my own environment — a large English department near New York — is at all representative, the literati have yet to hear his name. When they get around to reading him, they'll find what he has to say about paradox, puns, and abstractions is suggestive of all sorts of interesting notions about poetic language. They'll find a theory of learning that implies a theory of reading, and a vocabulary for discussing contexts and metacontexts that could greatly clarify the way we talk about literary conventions (codes, if you like), irony, tone, and so forth. All of Bateson's books are in print, and even in paperback; so is a collection of critical essays by various hands. Do we judge books by their covers? The packaging of Bateson's, especially the paperbacks, suggests a distinctly non-academic audience. The colors are psychedelic, the blurb-writers mavericks. The blurbs sound inflated, of course, but they are true.

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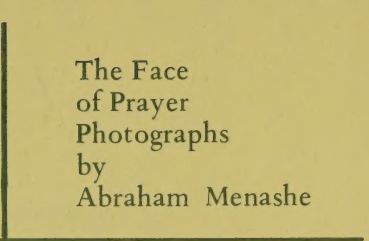

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THE POWER OF THE ARTS *(continued from page 39)*

They are directed toward a thing's usage instead of being concerned with the inherent characteristics of the individual thing itself, for its own sake. It is only when we detach our perception from practical interest and apprehend things for themselves rather than for ourselves that we assume the aesthetic attitude. The pervasive and habitual concern with usefulness that attends our daily attitudes prevents us, to a large degree, from contemplating things aesthetically.

The aesthetic attitude or experience, however, is vital to our emotional wellbeing. It is vital, because it gives us pure, unalloyed experiences — experiences that have integrity and are not contaminated by concerns beyond. Aesthetic experience satisfies that fundamental synthesis which we all long for: the synthesis of the self and the world without. In addition, it involves us more inclusively than other experiences do — it frequently engages our entire personalities.

Aesthetic feeling and sensitivity, which can be superlatively developed through the arts, are known to have a direct relationship to integrated and well-organized thinking, to rich and harmonious feelings and perceptions, and to a creative expression of thoughts and feelings. Indeed, it could be said that a good measure of our personalities is shaped by aesthetic feelings and sensitivities. Even a person whose aesthetic feelings are not well developed, or are not available to conscious awareness, experiences uneasiness and restlessness in the presence of aesthetically displeasing or jarring objects.

The aesthetic attitude also teaches us to be more discriminating and refined in our perceptions. It teaches us to pay heed to the uniqueness and individuality in situations, people, and objects. In our ordinary, everyday perception we usually tend to perceive labels, categories, and stock types. Our practical needs and purposes constrict our perceptions and we see only as much as is needed to satisfy categorization and labeling.

Considering the prepotency of practical concerns and needs, it is no small wonder that the aesthetic sense persists at all. As educator Francis Wilson speculates: "Perhaps the aesthetic sense persists in spite of all opposition because it is that part of the human being that is eternal and indestructible."

The aesthetic attitude puts us face to face with the inner reality of things. It lifts us above the strictly utilitarian stream of life and provides us with the peace of immediate comprehension, valuable in itself and not as a means to something else. Philosopher Hugo Munsterberg queries: "Can our life be complete in itself if everything comes in questions for us merely as a means to something else and never as valuable in its own offering; do not our minds in all the striving and rushing of daily life long for rest of satisfaction?" Jacques Maritain puts this even more forcefully: "One of the vicious trends which outrage our modern industrial civilization is a kind of asceticism at the service of the useful, a kind of unholy mortification for the sake of no superior life. Men are still capable of excitation and relaxation, but almost deprived of any pleasure and rest of the soul — a life which would seem insane even to the great materialists of antiquity."

THE EQUAL BALANCE

FOR thousands of years, rites of initiation have been teaching rebirth from the spirit; yet, strangely enough, man forgets again and again the meaning of divine procreation. Though this may be poor testimony to the strength of the spirit, the penalty for misunderstanding is neurotic decay, embitterment, atrophy, and sterility. It is easy enough to drive the spirit out of the door, but when we have done so the meal has lost its savour — the salt of the earth. Fortunately, we have proof that the spirit always renews its strength in the fact that the essential teaching of the initiations is handed on from generation to generation. Ever and again there are human beings who understand what it means that God is their father. The equal balance of the flesh and the spirit is not lost to the world. — Carl G. Jung

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